

POPULAR Computing WEEKLY

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June 5-11 1986

Vol 5 No 23

Sinclair abandons Pandora display

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- Sinclair abandons his flat screen TV technology for Pandora portable
- Pandora's Spectrum-compatibility scuppered by Amstrad deal
- 'Credit card' software – new configuration
- Full details below and inside

SINCLAIR Research appears to have abandoned the notion of using its flat screen TV in the Pandora portable, and is instead to use a more conventional Liquid Crystal Display (LCD).

Sinclair's original plan in-

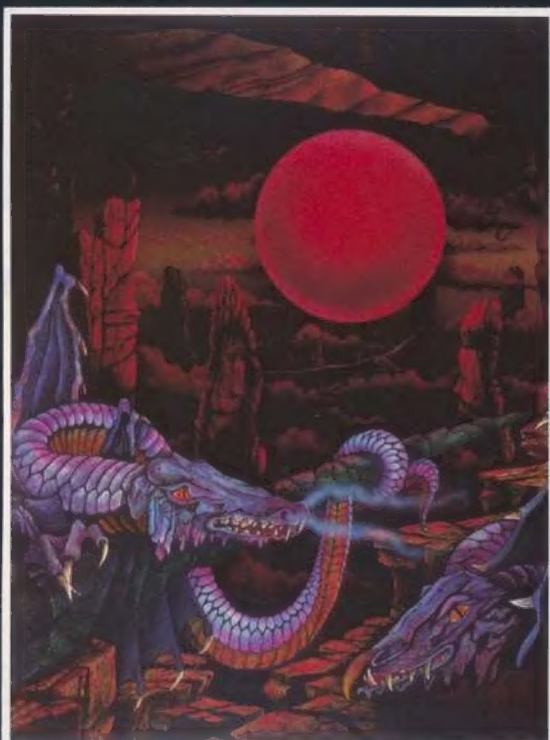
volved using an SLR camera style configuration of flat screen TV and magnifying mirror to produce a readable display. Reports of the prototype's performance were conflicting, but it appears that the viewing angle was critical, and this tells against a portable designed to be used in a variety of environments. Sinclair's decision to go for tried and tested LCD technology therefore has a certain amount of logic to it.

The machine itself is still likely to use credit card software, but rather than using disc or card for data storage it will be configured to store data in the 1M of Ram it will have on

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◀ **HARDWARE****11 Euromax joystick**

Euromax recently launched a wide range of 'controllers' - including joysticks and mice, Chris Jenkins looks at the choice available.

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John Cook sums up the possibilities on Psion's add-on statistics package for the Organiser pocket computer.

Life and Business Organiser

Gemini's modestly titled QL program functions as a comprehensive desk diary.

GAMES ▶**13 Trinity from Infocom**

Infocom's 20th adventure, *Trinity*, was launched at CES this week. Christina Erskine talks to its author, Brian Moriarty, about the game and Infocom's future

future plans.

15 Colour Feature

The Snow Queen from Mosaic.

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Music and the micro**

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**GAMES ▶****13 Trinity from Infocom**

Infocom's 20th adventure, *Trinity*, was launched at CES this week. Christina Erskine talks to its author, Brian Moriarty, about the game and Infocom's future

future plans.

15 Colour Feature

The Snow Queen from Mosaic.

17 Arcade Action**18 Reviews****20 Adventure Corner**

You have ignited a nuclear war.

And no, there is no animated display of a mushroom cloud with parts of bodies flying through the air.

We do not reward failure.

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Popular Computing Weekly. Tel: 01-437 4343.

ABC

How to submit articles Articles which are submitted for publication should not be more than 2000 words long. The articles, and any accompanying programs, should be original. It is breaking the law of copyright to copy programs out of other magazines and submit them here - so please do not be tempted. We cannot guarantee to return your programs - so please do not send your only copy. Accuracy *Popular Computing Weekly* cannot accept any responsibility for any errors in programs we publish, although we will always try our best to make sure programs work.

Commodore to shed another 70 jobs

IN yet another round of redundancies Commodore has cut its Corby staff by 54 per cent. The latest jobs lost are in the company's 70-strong sales and servicing team, which has been closed down. This leaves only 60 people working in the echoing caverns of the Corby factory.

The closure of Commodore's servicing facilities means that from the beginning of July dealers will have to make their own arrangements for repairs

and support.

Commodore has appointed Verran Micro Maintenance as its agent for repairs and support, and has recommended that dealers use this company.

Commodore UK's acting general manager, Chris Kaday, said that the loss of the sales and servicing team was part of the knock-on effect of the company's plans to sell the Corby plant, which ceased micro production in January. It has been decided that service,

spares and warehousing should be transferred to third parties pending the sale rather than relocated. Kaday added that the new stripped down operation would be more flexible, and in line with the operations which competing companies run.

No buyer has yet been found for Corby, but although Commodore had intended to lease back some of the plant it now seems likely that the company will move out.



Clive: Planning screen-test?

Pandora loses its flat screen TV

◀ Continued from page 1

board. Sinclair's original plan involved using Wafer Scale Integration units for storage, but the new company set up to produce these (see separate news item) is aiming the devices further upmarket, so units for the Pandora may not be available for some time.

In any event the project is now very much up in the air. Pandora was initially intended to be Spectrum compatible, but as Amstrad now has the rights to the Spectrum this is probably no longer an option. The machine was to have been produced at Timex's Dundee factory, but the abandonment of the flat screen display means Sinclair is no longer tied to Dundee, which is one of the few places in the world that can produce it.

The Pandora project itself is now Sir Clive's personal baby, so much so that no-one at Sinclair, with the exception of Clive, is able to comment on it.

Fire fuels exports

A fire at a Hungarian microchip plant has practically wiped out the country's chip production capability, and is likely to have serious knock-on effects throughout Eastern Europe. This could, however, be good news for Western computer manufacturers, as it is likely to expand further the market opened up by Timex Portugal's recent deal with Poland to supply 800,000 Spectrum-based machines and 200,000 disc drives.

Takis Patrikarakos of Micro Interface, which acts as European agent for Timex Portugal



Timex's Polish star

and which negotiated the Polish deal, stressed "I did not start the fire, but the arrival of the Spectrum in Poland could signal the adoption of the machine throughout the Eastern

bloc." He was therefore hopeful that Timex could play a part in any Hungarian deal.

The Eastern Europe market is still largely untapped, and because the United States continues to block the export of more advanced machines like the IBM PC and the QL it is particularly attractive to companies like Timex, which sell 8-bit micros. The 800,000 machines going to Poland represent a significant addition to the estimated five million Spectrums sold so far, and give an indication of the market's potential size.

Medic boss plans comeback

FORMER Medic Datasystems boss Chris Skoglund may be attempting a come-back, trading under the name Easysoft. Both Hampshire Fraud Squad and the Official Receiver are eager to discuss Medic's affairs with Skoglund, but the latter is currently out of their jurisdiction in the Republic of Ireland. A spokesman for the Official Receiver described him as "very naughty."

Medic, which had trailed a series of QL peripherals including disc drives and Ram expansions through 1985, crashed last December after cashing customers' cheques

and failing to deliver the goods. According to Hampshire Fraud Squad, Skoglund is unable to trade in this country until such time as he cooperates with the Official Receiver, but attempts to contact him have all failed.

Information received by *Popular Computing Weekly* indicates that Skoglund is using the Easysoft name to set up an Irish-based mail order software company.

This will use mail shots to sell software direct in this country. *Popular Computing Weekly* would be interested to hear from anyone receiving such a mail shot.

WSI revisited

SIR Clive Sinclair's Water Scale Integration project is off the ground again, under the auspices of a new company called Anamartic - the Greek for 'fault free'. The new company is being backed by Barclays Bank in the tune of £2 million, and is thought to be attempting to raise finance in the City.

WSI itself was initially intended to be a battery backed-up Ram equivalent of a Winchester disc, providing cheap mass storage for micros. The project now seems to have been revised to provide storage for more specialised mini-computer systems, with first units being shipped towards the end of the year.

Amstrad Tolkien

MELBOURNE House is to release *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* for the Amstrad PCW 8256 in July, and is also planning to convert *The Hobbit* to run on the IBM PC and the Apple.

The company also intends to sell a repackaged version of the *Hobbit* without the Tolkien novel for £9.95, although the earlier version will still be sold at the old price of £14.95. The relaunch will be supported by coverage in computer magazines, national and regional newspapers and local radio.

Games are big at CES show

FIRST reports from the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) held in Chicago earlier this week indicated a dramatic surge in the games market. Japanese newcomer Nintendo was there, alongside the more established games console specialist Sega, and both companies had taken very large stands.

At the time of his Sinclair purchase Alan Sugar expressed interest in the dedicated games machine market, citing the success of Nintendo's console in Japan as justification for this. More recently this has fuelled speculation concerning an Amstrad/Nintendo tie-up, but the latter's presence in Chicago may mean it's prepared to go it alone in the West.

Atari, which cites its own games consoles as a primary reason for its return to profitability under Jack Tramiel, seemed to have taken matters a little far. The company was running a large stand which

combined business and games, but which seemed to fall uneasily between the two.

On the software side the major US players, including Microprose, Sublogic, Batteries included and Activision/Infocom, were there, with the latter duo giving Infocom's adventures their first outing under the Activision banner.

Of the UK companies Mastertronic and Firebird's US arm, Firebird Licensees, were the most bullish.

Both claim promising US operations, and Firebird's morale has gained a timely boost by Elite's arrival at number one in the US Billboard chart.

Early reports from the show also suggested that IBM PC clone prices had dropped even further, with some of them predicting a fall to \$350 by Christmas. This would put Amstrad's PC in the mainstream price-wise, and could help establish the IBM standard in the home/small business area.

Amstrad hires Timex to build its Plus 2

PRODUCTION of Amstrad's successor to the Sinclair Spectrum, the Plus 2, will shortly be under way at the Timex factories in Dundee previously used by Sinclair Research. The new machine is scheduled for launch in September, will have a built in tape deck, at least 128K Ram, and will cost £140.

Timex's contract with Amstrad is for the manufacture of this machine and for 8256 printers, and although Timex won't comment on the number of units involved the initial computer order isn't likely to be for more than 100-150,000 machines. Timex spokesman Jim Muir expressed satisfaction on the winning of the contract, and said that it would employ 100-200 people for a year.

One source close to Timex did however suggest that the

contract price had been pitched deliberately low to secure the business, and that it was unlikely the company would make any significant profit on the deal. Whether Amstrad will countenance a price rise later, however, remains to be seen.

At the time of his purchase of the Sinclair rights Amstrad boss Alan Sugar complained that EEC duties on microchip imports made it difficult for him to produce in the UK.

He said then that he wished to manufacture here, but that Sinclair's UK suppliers would have to make the grade in terms both of price and quality.

It would appear that Timex has done this, although the initial order is small compared to the sort of sales level a new Spectrum machine would be expected to achieve.



Lonely QL seeks financier.

Backers back away from QL 2

TONY Tebby, who floated plans for a QL mark two at the last ZX Microfair, has parted company with his first backers, but claims to be on the point of signing a contract that will save the project. Tebby had initially asked dealers to "put their money where their mouths are" by investing in the project, but failed to raise the required £250,000.

He claims that, although dealers are clamouring for stocks of the machine, it's a different story when they're asked to put money up, and he

views their lack of action as "highly hypocritical." However, one dealer who had been considering investing money told *Popular Computing Weekly* that he and others had been reluctant to move until Tebby's QDOS compatible operating system was finished.

Tebby himself is still confident that the machine will go into production, and is aiming for a September launch and delivery in October. Its specification was being finalised last week, and further development should follow.

OU aims for low-price PC

THE Open University wants its own micro produced, and is inviting manufacturers to comment on its required technical specifications. These are ambitious - the machine should run PCDOS or MSDOS, have a minimum 512K Ram, 512K disc storage, 300/300 and 1200/75 modem, serial and centronics ports, mouse, three expansion slots, PC/AT style keyboard, monitor and 100 cps printer.

All this, says the OU, should be available for £500. The machine itself will also have to be able to run Lotus 1-2-3, UCSD Pascal, Gem, PC Automator, Sidekick and Wordstar.

At the price the obvious contender for the contract is Amstrad. Although the PC the company intends to launch at

the end of next week won't include a modem, a twin disc version of the machine with monochrome monitor and 512K Ram would be within striking distance of the OU's requirements.

Other major manufacturers who might be interested include Olivetti, which is interested in establishing MSDOS as an educational standard, and Sanyo, whose cheap PC compatibles are already approved for use in Germany's schools. The low price, however, coupled with the fact that the OU predicts a maximum of only 30,000 sales in the first year of the course, 1988, means that the contract won't be as attractive to manufacturers as the BBC one was.

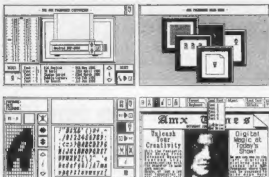
Firebird's Thrust is Superior

FIREBIRD Silver's *Thrust*, only the second Firebird budget game to top the charts, is to be released as a full-price BBC game by Superior Software. Firebird's version, for Commodore 64 only, costs £1.99, while Superior's game will retail at £7.95 for tape.

Speaking on behalf of Firebird a smug Tom Watson observed that Superior's pricing of the game showed what good value Firebird's 64 version

was. Firebird, he said, hadn't wanted the BBC rights because BBC games tend to be more expensive, and it wasn't felt worthwhile to release it as a BBC budget game.

Firebird itself is currently negotiating to buy the 68000 rights to *Elite*. Should the company be successful this is likely to produce the "Elite-like game" it promised at the Personal Computer World show in September 1985.



Pagemaker for Amstrad launched

AMS's Pagemaker is now available for the Amstrad 464, 664 and 6128 - three months late. The product had been scheduled for launch at the Manchester Amstrad Show in March.

The package combines a typesetter, graphics and word processor for £49.95. Details from Advanced Memory Systems, 166-70 Wilderspool Causeway, Warrington WA4 6QA (0925 413501/2/3).

T-shirt printer

BANBURY Business Computers is marketing Underware?

Transfer ribbons - special printer ribbons designed to allow you to transfer lettering and images from the screen to T-shirts and other fabrics. In order to do so you have to convert your screen design to mirror image using AMX SuperArt, Pagemaker or a screen dump routine, then print out onto ordinary listing paper.

The design can then be ironed onto fabric, and is claimed to be permanent and washable. The ribbons cost £12 for black and £19 for five colour.

Details from Banbury Business Computers, 3 Schofields Way, Bloxham, Banbury, oxon (0295 720812).

CBM teletext adaptor

MICROTEXT has produced a teletext adaptor for the Commodore 64/128. The adaptor turns the Commodore into a teletext receiver, and is claimed to be the only one of its kind suitable for use throughout Europe (except France), Australia and New Zealand. It fits into the machine's user port, and costs £69.95.

Details from Microtext, 7 Birdlip Place, Horndean, Hants PO8 9PW (0705 595694).

RS232 checker

MAPLIN is now selling Heathkit's PMK-130 Breakfast Box, which can be used to test and modify the interfacing of computers and equipment us-

ing the RS232b standard. Battery-driven, it allows lines to be switched around to determine the correct pinout. It costs £78.95 plus VAT.

Details from Maplin Professional Supplies, PO Box 777, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8LU (0702 552961).

Pocket Wordstar on the Amstrad

MICROPRO has transferred Pocket Wordstar Deluxe to the Amstrad 6128, PCW 8256 and 8512 micros. Pocket Wordstar Deluxe is an improved version including the Spell Star spelling checker and a mailmerge facility. It costs £69.95.

Details from MicroPro, Haygarth House, 28-31 High Street, Wimbledon, London SW19 5BY (01-879 1122).



Diary Dates

JUNE

10-12 June Comdex International in Europe

Nice, France
Details: Business exhibition covering computers, printers, peripherals and software.
Price: Free entry by business registration.
Organiser: Reed Exhibitions, 01-643 6040.

13-15 June The Amstrad Computer Show

Novotel, London
Details: Hardware, software and peripherals for Amstrad micros.
Price: £3 adults, £2 children, £1 discount for advance sales.
Organiser: Database Publications, 061-456 8383.

24-26 June Computer '86

G-Mex Exhibition Centre, Manchester.
Details: Business and industry computer show, formerly known as the Northern Computer Show.
Price: Free entry by business registration.
Organiser: Reed Exhibitions, 01-643 6040.

JULY

16-18 July PC User Show

Olympia, London
Details: Hardware and software for IBM machines and their compatibles.
Organiser: EMAP, 01-608 1161.

24-27 July Acorn User Exhibition

Barbican Centre, London
Details: Hardware, software and peripherals for the Electron, BBC micro and Master machines. Trade only 10am-1pm on 24 July.

Price: £3 adults, £2 children, £1 discount for advance sales.
Organiser: Editionscheme, 01-349 4667.

SEPTEMBER

3-7 September Personal Computer World Show

Olympia, London
Details: Software and hardware for home, educational and business computer users. For the first time this year the show is to be organised in three separate halls - business, games and education.
Price: £2.
Organiser: Montbuid, 01-487 5831.

13-14 September Commodore Horizons Show

UMIST, Manchester
Details: A wide range of Commodore hardware, software and peripherals.

Price: £3 adults, £2 children, £1 discount for advance booking.
Organiser: Database Publications, 061-456 8383.

26-28 September Electron and BBC Micro User Show Barbican Centre, London

Details: Software, hardware and peripherals for the Electron, BBC micro and Master machines. Produced by Acorn.
Price: £3 adults, £2 children, £1 discount for advance booking.
Organiser: Database Publications, 061-456 8383.

Prices, dates and venues of shows can vary, and you are therefore strongly advised to check with the show organiser before attending. Popular Computing Weekly cannot accept responsibility for any alterations to show arrangements made by the organiser.



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Printer error

I read with interest your article in this week's (May 15) issue of *Popular Computing Weekly*, concerning our Centronics GLP printer. Firstly, thanks very much for reviewing the GLP, but I did notice a slight error in the copy which your readers may want to know about.

Peter Worlock suggested that he would have preferred a hardware setting for NLQ mode. On the front panel of the GLP are two Sinclair style switches marked "On Line" and "LF"; above "LF" is an LED marked "NLQ". When the GLP is off line the "LF" button may be used to line feed paper for positioning before printing, and when on line the "LF" button can be used — at any time — to toggle NLQ whenever desired, shown by the state of the LED on or off.

I am glad that you reviewed our machine and explained the full potential as well as you did.

D C White

Saga Systems

Peter Worlock replies: Okay — I missed this in the documentation, but why not actually mark the switch to make it clear?

Disgraceful quality

I think the quality of tapes marketed is disgraceful. Firstly the actual quality of the tape is poor, resulting in sides not loading, due to blanks, poor recording or age of tape. I have experienced all three and have either had my money back or had replacement tapes; the latter not always rectifying the

problem. Another problem is the encoding methods: hyperload, novaload, loading with fast baud rates, all of which do not help with loading and reinforce the problem after the tape is barely a couple of months old.

Thirdly, the games themselves: they suffer from being drab, barely playable, ie, poor design and plot; you can't help feeling that it's been a waste of money and that reviewers don't know what they are talking about. Moreover it is usually overpriced.

Of course the software companies claim that their pricing policy is to regain lost revenue via piracy. The home pirates give the pricing policy for their excuse, not the excuse of breaking the law to be 'hard'. When a good piece of software comes into the consumer's hands it will be undoubtedly transformed to another media to overcome the inadequacies if the media it was bought on, eg, with a button device a game could be transferred from low quality tape originally bought to high quality tape. The companies may scream blue murder because of lost sales; they should have put it on quality tape in the first place.

Take note of the record industry — comparing singles with software titles and software titles to albums you can see the difference; especially when artists take longer to produce albums than programmers take to write a single program.

Software companies should produce games on credit card-style cartridges. They cannot be reproduced by the consumer, have a long lifespan and

Star Letter

QL Positioning

The AT command on the QL is very useful for positioning characters on the screen for *Print* statements, but never have I seen it used for *Input* statements; even though it can be used to position the flashing cursor. If the first listing below is substituted for the second one, then the operator doesn't have to wait to find out what the questions will be before answering the current one.

Listing one
5 REMARK "1st listing"
10 CLS:CLS80
20 PRINT
30 INPUT "AMOUNT £:" IPND
40 PRINT
50 INPUT "RATE:" IRAT
60 PRINT

70 INPUT "CURRENCY:" ICUR
80 CLS
90 REMARK "1st listing"
100 AT 10,2:PRINT "FOR £:" IPND:"YOU GET £:" ICUR:"IPND:RAT

Listing 2
5 REMARK "2nd listing"
16 CLS:CLS80
20 AT 5,4:PRINT "AMOUNT £:"
30 AT 8,4:PRINT "RATE:"
40 AT 10,4:PRINT "CURRENCY:"
50 REM "1st listing"
60 AT 10,14:INPUT IPND
70 AT 10,14:INPUT IRAT
80 CLS
90 AT 10,2:PRINT "FOR £:" IPND:"YOU GET £:" ICUR:"IPND:RAT

D J Piggott
Saudi Arabia

D J Piggott gets a year's supply of *Popular* binders.

can store up to 1M. Maybe we can then expect decent software at prices similar to that of records: single titles priced similar to singles and compilations near to album prices.

Darren Stanley
Worthing
W Sussex

One reason for comparatively higher prices for software that you do not mention is volume of sales; a number one software title sells far fewer units than a number one record.

Piracy is a very real threat to software publishers, which detracts considerably from their sales, but transferring a title you have bought to a better quality blank tape does not

necessarily lose the publisher revenue.

Spectrum quirks

I have found an unusual and somewhat advantageous quirk on the Spectrum 128.

When using *The Music Box* by Melbourne House, I broke into the program and typed *Spectrum*, which brings it into 48K mode, and then typed *Run*.

I found that you can still have proper three channel sound on a normal Spectrum. It seems that the sound chip can be used in 48K mode, but only in machine code, as the mode does not have the *Play* command.

I also discovered that if you

continued on page 10 ▶

Puzzle

Puzzle No 211

Jamie and Ben were sitting idly watching the Bank Holiday traffic go past. "Want to make a bet?", enquired Ben, "Fifty pence stake each and winner takes all."

"O.K.," replied Jamie, "What's the bet?"
"You name any number in the range 1 to 999", explained Ben, "then we watch the number plates of the passing cars to see if your number comes up. We'll only count the more usual type of registration number — foreign plates or those with more than three digits in the number part of the plate we'll disregard. Now, as any number in the range 1 to 999 is equally likely to come along, we'll count off the next 500 cars that pass. If your number is amongst them you win the pound. If it's not, I win! That's a fair bet!"

"Just a minute!", replied Jamie. "That's not fair at all! To make it a fair bet and our chances equal, my chosen number has to appear on one of the first —"

How many cars did Jamie state must pass if the bet is to be a fair one?

Solution to Puzzle 206

The smallest box with the required property is one measuring 12 by 21 by 28 inches. This will have a volume of 7056 cubic inches, and a surface area of 2352 square inches. The program takes the three principal dimensions as variables A, B, and C, and calculates the volume and surface areas in each case. Each of the variables differs from the others, A being taken as the largest of the three, and the smaller orders of sizes are computed first.

Winner of Puzzle No 211

The winner is John Wheeler of Sutton, Surrey. Rules

The closing date for puzzle No 211 is July 2.

```
10 A=3
20 FOR B=2 TO A-1
30 FOR C=1 TO B-1
40 VOL=A*B*C:AREA=2*
  (A*B+A*C+B*C)
45 IF VOL/AREA>3 THEN
  GOTO 60
50 PRINT A;" "B;" "
  C;" "VOL;AREA
60 NEXT C
70 NEXT B
80 A=A+1:GOTO 20
```


Evesham Micros

PRINTER OFFERS

Check out these offers on top quality dot matrix printers. All the models offered are substantially reduced from the normal high street prices. Prices are fully inclusive of VAT, delivery and lead to suit any computer with centronics parallel printer port, e.g. Amstrad, S.B.C., Evinet, Atari ST, Onic, Dragon, Manatech or MSX. For the IBM 44125 we supply a user port centronics cable. For Spectrum or QL owners an appropriate interface is supplied for an extra £20.00, for Atari models other than the AT an extra £30.00. Delivery is by insured recognised delivery and orders are despatched the next working day after receipt, provided we have stock.

JUKI 5510

Our best offer yet! This printer has a recommended price of £299.00 plus VAT. It is a very professional 140 cps model that boasts the luxury of three point N.Cut 30cps as well as all the usual amenities such as friction and tractor feed, EPSON compatibility (including the ribbon), 3K buffer, etc. One aspect that is different about this model is that it can be upgraded to COLOUR specification by purchasing the optional colour kit. (£112.50)

**High quality three pass N.L.Q.
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Good underline

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Letters

I also discovered that if you go into 128 mode and type Spectrum again, editing will be slightly faster.

Finally, a handy *Poke, Poke* 23750, 16 makes your program totally invisible to see and it also stops program titles being printed when loading. This is useful when you are loading a program after a *Screen\$* which you don't want disturbed.

Paul Osborne
Romford

ly, 12-13 Little Newport Street,
London WC2H 7PP.

Unitsoft problem

I recently wrote to you about not receiving certain items ordered from Unitsoft, a company advertising in your magazine.

Could you please let me know if any progress has been made.

L. Coburn
Rotherham

As we reported in last week's News Desk, Unisoft has ceased trading. Since it was not registered as a limited company, settlement with the creditors lies entirely with Unisoft's two partners. For information and advice, you can write to John Hendry and Co at 3 Lynedoch Street, Glasgow, Scotland. This is the firm currently dealing with Unisoft's affairs.

Atari appreciation

I am delighted to see you have started to cover the Atari ma-



"What are they going to call it? The BBC?"

chines more. I actually own a Commodore 64 at the moment, but after toying around with a friend's Atari 800XL, I know what a superior machine it is, both for programming and for games, etc. It murders the C64, and its sound and graphics capabilities are amazing.

However, I was shocked at Andy Moss's review of *King of the Mings* (April 3-9), where he said, "it's nice to see some quality 8-bit Atari software being produced". To be honest, I have never seen anything other

er than high quality Atari software.

Please continue to review Atari software. Atari will make it big this year.

G. Wheaton
Bolton

Binders wanted

The *Popular Computing Weekly* binders which you are giving away as a prize for the Star Letter are just what I need to control my collection of *Popular Computing Weekly*.

Unfortunately I can't write letters good enough to be a Star Letter, so please can you tell me how I can buy the binders and how much they cost.

Stephen Vysny
St Andrews

Popular Computing Weekly binders are available at £3.50 each, from Helen Perry at 12-13, Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7PP. Please add £1.50 to the cost for postage and packing. If you order ten or more binders at one time, there is a 10% discount.

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Send your thoughts to Letters. *Popular Computing Week-*

[illegible]

Market choice

In the spirit of 'free competition and market choice', Euromax Electronics has released a bundle of excellent 'controllers' for the Commodore/Amstrad/Spectrum micros, some of which are familiar products repackaged, and some of which are completely new.

Euromax's joysticks and mice all have one thing in common: they are certainly not of the "throwaway" variety, and are all constructed to be durable and reliable.

To look at the mouse products first, Euromax's most familiar offering is the Cheese mouse, familiar to *Popular* readers as the Wignmore House Commodore 64 mouse. This device is a very sleek, durable and reliable mouse, with two large click switches and a non-slip, rubber coated roller ball.

The art package provided, *Cheese*, is an icon-driven program with a full selection of line, box, circle, pattern and copy facilities, and is remarkably good. Euromax is selling the cassette version of this system at £64.95 for the Commodore 64 and plans versions for the Amstrad, MSX and Spectrum later in the year. Pricy, but worth it.

A cheaper alternative is the Mighty Mouse, at £59.95. This is a slightly less streamlined device, and to my mind less comfortable to use. The switches are

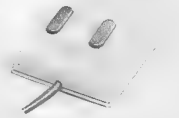
smaller, though they have the same clean, positive action as the Cheese mouse.

The Mighty Mouse works with the C64, Atari and Spectrum, and with the Amstrad using the interface box supplied. This consists of a joystick-type port with a follow-on lead, a power socket with lead, and a switch which converts the mouse inputs to joystick mode. The Mighty Mouse is a fair alternative to the Cheese mouse, but I for one would be willing to pay the extra for the superior product.

Also on the way from Euromax is a series of high-quality joysticks. It continues to amaze me that cheap, fragile sticks are selling in large quantities, when something like the Euromax Micro Ace, at around £15.95, is much more accurate and should last ten times as long. This is a micro-switch joystick with a wedge-shaped body and single centre-mounted thumb-operated fire button. I can attest to its accuracy and reliability, since I used it to finally complete *Uridium*!

Also available is the Pro Ace, at around £11.95 – the same body, but with left switches. Rather stiff in use and not as stirring an experience as the Micro Ace.

Next up is the Wiz Card, another of those credit-card-type controllers with a four-way pad operated by the thumb, and a fire



button operated by the other thumb. Pretty useless, as you can imagine, to anyone without thumbs. The Wiz Card, like its lookalikes the JoyCard and so on, is cheap, at £8.95, and probably indestructible, but would take hours of practise to master.

Also in the pipeline is a series of micro-switch joysticks, some with autofire, and a tracker ball. The Elite, Professional, Supreme and Turbo models will be launched between now and September, and cover the £15-£23 price range, while the Joyball will be around £34.95.

Chris Jenkins

Program Mouse/Cheese, Mighty Mouse, joysticks Micro Commodore 64, Amstrad, Atari etc Supplier Euromax, Pinfold Lane, Bridlington, North Humberside YO16 5XR (0262 601006).

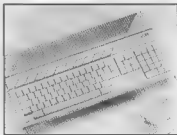
Competition Results

Word Wizards

The moment you've all been waiting for – the winners of the hugely successful Word Wizards competition. We were overwhelmed with the response as more than 2,000 of you entered.

We asked you to find 18 computer-related words, and to re-organise their initials into an 18-letter phrase. The

First prize: C128D with colour monitor



Second prize: Atari 520ST package

phrase, as nearly all of you discovered, was Machine Code Monitor, and the following are the winners:

First prize of a Commodore 128D with colour monitor goes to C ■ Oswin, of Christchurch. The two runners-up prizes of Atari 520 STMs with disc drives go to Philip Moore, of Rugeley, Staffs; and M S Hurst, of Eltham, London SE9.

Copies of Mirrorsoft's excellent *Spitfire*



40 are on their way to Philip Northam, of Dundee; David Collins, of London SE9; Michael Yates, of Peterborough; Paul Burton, of York; Nicholas Lumsden, of London E9; S Wright, of Clacton; Gary Burns, of Gateshead; David Murray, of St Albans; ■ Shearing, of South Ascot; M Richards, of Whitstable; Dennis Carroll, of Renfrewshire; T Cosens, of Reigate; Alistair Smith, of Edinburgh; Chi-Yeung Choy, of South Ruislip; Mrs F Davis, of Sheffield; G MacKenzie, of Dufftown; David Crew, of Ashford; and Sue Davies, at BFPO 21.

The following BBC owners will receive copies of *Strike Force Harrier*: G Osley, of Hereford; Alan Diamond, of Wembley; Geoffrey Hirst, of Halifax; Justin Lloyd, of Mid Glamorgan; and T Gibson of Derby.

Number crunching

It's a little bit difficult to say exactly who Psion is expecting to purchase its excellent (but hardly inexpensive) *Organiser II*. Some of its features suggest a primarily executive market – but the *Maths Pack* contains functions which the average exec would have slight difficulty getting their head round.

The *Organiser* does contain various common 'scientific'

machine, but Bessel functions, Eigen values, Error functions? This pack is certainly aimed at mathematicians, scientists and students who want to do some serious number crunching.

As with the *Finance Pack*, the *Maths Pack* is a read-only cartridge (which slots neatly into one of the datapak drives) that contains a series of procedures written in OPL (*Organiser Programming Language*) called up from the main menu. The five main functions are *Solve* (for solving various types of equation), *Integrate* (for numerical integration) *Statistics* (offering *Error Function* and correlation), *Curve Fitting*, and *Function*, which will perform seven extra maths functions which are not catered for straight from OPL.

As I look through some admittedly fairly limited exercises, all the options worked well and I was pleased with the overall performance.

There are calculators around that will do these sorts of things for you, but they are expensive and, I suspect, not as easy to use as the menu-driven *Organiser*.

Certainly for numbers people with *Organisers* – and if you



functions, (Sin, Tan, etc) which can be accessed from the Calc function on the stand-alone

Them were the days . . .

I came over all nostalgic as soon as I saw the inlays, produced on low-budget paper with the aid of the programs themselves. The manuals, chugged out using *Tasword*, reinforced this, and when *Designer* wouldn't load at first, a tear sprang to my eye. Amateurish production and poorly duplicated tapes? Ah, them were the days . . .

Unfortunately, just as production methods have moved on, so have programming standards. The two programs *Designer* and *Character Designer* are sold together, and are basically user defined graphics-based print utilities. Both are Basic listings with a smattering of machine code – *Designer* helpfully has a memory map in the manual, and volunteers the information that the machine code element takes up 250 bytes. This slightly lop-sided approach becomes evident in

areas like character reversal – the manual tells you that you have to wait a short period for this, but doesn't tell you it's being done by a Basic Peek and Poke loop, which is naturally slowed drastically by the Basic element.

Character Designer is relatively simple to explain – it's basically an enhanced version of the UDG designer programs you can pick up from magazine listings, and is intended to plug into *Designer*. The latter is a menu-driven system – again mainly Basic – which can be used to produce and print line drawing and text graphic designs. When it does load it does its job effectively, but isn't really advanced enough to stand out from the crowd.

I don't really see how *Gap* is going to find a market for these at a combined price of £12.45 (although they are available separately).

want a programmable calculator and damn the expense, possibly worth buying the main unit just to run it.

John Cook

Dear diary

There is still a healthy support for the QL among consumers, and it's heartening to see more and more support from the software houses, who may still make a healthy profit by producing the right kind of program for an eager public.

If you're a busy professional who keeps a QL powered up on the desk during office hours, you might find Gemini's new package, *The Life and Business Organiser*, of some use. Essentially a database of important dates, it is easy to set up: just input the date and then any information that you would normally keep in a diary. Obvious applications are birthdays and other anniversaries and appointments, both business and domestic – but categories may be re-defined as required.

Subsequently, the program can be used as any other database: a search function looks for the required string, so that you may, for example, type in "Aunt Mary" to find the date of her birthday, or "car" to find when to send off the cheque for

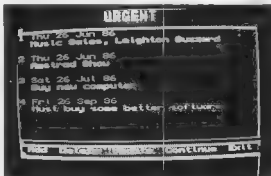
the road tax or book in for an MOT.

But the program is more than this: the next time you switch the machine on, you'll be reminded of urgent dates and appointments, overdue messages which have not been acted upon and so on. Weekly and monthly charts can also be requested, which display a breakdown of appointments with double-bookings being highlighted.

LBO is a very easy program to use, and with the 'export-to-Quill' option making hard copy available, this is a genuinely useful 'computer diary' – my QL already has all the copy deadline dates and auntie's birthdays . . . oh dear, no more excuses!

Tony Bridge

Program LBO (Life and Business Organiser) Micro QL Price £19.95 Supplier Gemini Computers, Gemini House, Concorde Road, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.



As far as I'm concerned the clincher is the way the programs are protected. There are several, fairly elementary, methods used, one of them being the old Ink 7:Paper 7 gag. This was outdated three years ago, and quite frankly I find it impossible to take any program incorporating it serious-

ly. And using *Not Pi* to reduce memory requirement?

John Lettice

Program Designer and Character Designer Micro Spectrum Price £12.45 Supplier Gap Software, 17 John's Terrace, London E7.

Living with the bomb

Christina Erskine talks to Infocom's Brian Moriarty about his latest adventure, *Trinity*.

Text adventures are very much Infocom's territory; the company has deservedly earned itself a reputation for sophisticated parsing, fiendish puzzles and a rich vein of humour in its 19 titles.

In the US, where Infocom is based, the games are available on all the most popular machines, that is, the Commodore 64, 8-bit Atari, 8-bit Apples, and the IBM PC.

Consequently, the UK has not had much of a chance to enjoy Infocom's adventures en masse. Although the company had a marketing agreement with Softsel over here, it did nothing to bring down prices to the level at which British consumers were used to paying, and Infocom has thus had more of a cult status here.

All that is set to change with the acquisition of Infocom by Activision, announced earlier this year. The full Infocom catalogue is set to become more readily available in the UK, and at a cheaper price. Provisional pricing is at three levels: £19.95, £24.99 and £29.99, but Activision has yet to finalise this.

Infocom's 20th text adventure is being unveiled at the Summer CES in Chicago this week. Called *Trinity*, and written by Brian Moriarty, who was also responsible for *Wishbringer* last year, it has all the hallmarks of classic Infocom titles but with a more controversial theme than most.

Trinity's plot centres on the history of atomic weapon testing throughout the world, from the first test site in the Mexico desert, which gave its name, *Trinity*, to the adventure, through Nagasaki, the Pacific islands, to the Siberian wastes.

As the player, you get the chance to visit all these places and try to avert the bomb's detonation. The action takes place in the 'near future', so you have the US's SDI (Star Wars) to contend with as well.

I did a lot of research to make sure everything was as accurate as possible," claims Brian Moriarty.

Fantasy land

It's a brave subject for a game, and certainly not one you would associate with Infocom's humour. Brian explains:

"I have tried as much as possible to place these real events within a fantasy land. You start off in Kensington Gardens, in London, and enter the rest of the game through a white trap door, so it's separated from reality in that sense.

"However, all the scenarios are recreated as faithfully as I could. My research was very extensive; I read as much as I could on the bomb and visited some of the test sites, including *Trinity* itself. I started on the *Trinity* project in 1983, but I didn't start actually writing and coding the adventure until about a year ago.

Did all the research, reading and accumulated knowledge change Brian's own

views on the nuclear threat? "I certainly feel I have a better informed philosophy now. But the main game thrust is not one of facts and figures. It still retains a humorous vein, although it's not in bad taste; after all, it's a serious subject."

Brian had wanted to write an adventure featuring the atom bomb for some time; he was interested in the fascination that nuclear weaponry holds over people.

"There is something seductively appealing about it to juvenile minds - it's almost pornographic," he explains. "I remember reading about nuclear technology as a boy - there's something almost God-like about it, because you are almost literally wielding the power of the universe: creating and exploding a hydrogen bomb, for instance, is like manufacturing a star.

"When I began the specific research, I started to see its fascination as pornographic rather than seductive. I can't see how anyone in their right minds could work in a nuclear laboratory, yet, aside from the fact that the uses it is put to are abhorrent, it comes down to a fascination with billion dollar toys.

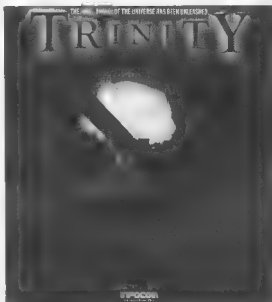
"I hope the game will be both entertaining and thought-provoking. If I get lots of hate-mail because of it, then I'll know that at least I've made people think."

He certainly made Infocom's testers think. A number criticised *Trinity* for being biased towards one faction or another, others stringently checked the accuracy of the scenarios. All Infocom titles spend six to seven months being tested, both in-house, and also by about 100 members of the public, before being released.

True to Infocom tradition, Brian was solely responsible for *Trinity*, its research, design, coding, packaging, and the famous Infocom 'freebies' - the pack. *Trinity* includes a book on the history of the nuclear age, written by Brian himself.

It was coded, as are all the titles on Infocom's own development system, based on a DEC20.

"It looks extremely old-fashioned, like a large set of refrigerators," said Brian.



"But the system itself, which we call ZIL, for Zork Implementation Language, has been refined over the last six years, so that it's now very easy to use, and you don't need a vast amount of programming experience to get to grips with it. ZIL is based on MDL, a high level language which is based on Lisp."

Nuclear age

The other great advantage of ZIL is its portability. The completed code for *Trinity*, which took up 1.3 megabytes of space on the DEC20, was compiled down to 256K into 'Z-code', which is entirely machine independent. "All we need after that is a small interpreter for Z-code for each machine. That's why we've always been able to bring out a number of versions of any one title very quickly."

Brian does not foresee any great changes for Infocom, now that it has joined the Activision stable. "We're not moving, we're not changing staff, no-one is coming down from Activision to tell us to put graphics on the adventures - we'll squash that idea before they even think of it - and while we may diversify our range we'll do it carefully. Games based on role-playing systems, like *Wizardry* or *Ultima 3* are a good bet, but there will be no arcade games from Infocom; we're just not interested."

Trinity will be launched by Activision under the Infocom label in the UK this summer, for the Commodore 64/128, Apple IIc, Atari ST, Macintosh 512K, Commodore Amiga and IBM PC.

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St Brides meets the Snow Queen

John Minson joins Gerda on her quest to rescue her friend Kay from the Snow Queen

I must confess to loving Hans Christian Andersen's story, *The Snow Queen*. Despite the simplicity of the surface quest, it's full of the deep symbolic meanings that get psychoanalysts so excited, and ruled over by a brooding sense of evil.

I also have a great regard for St Brides, the Irish St Trinian's, whose first adventure was one of last year's oddest releases. Put the two together and you have a quirky two-part classic, which should reach a wide audience thanks to a publishing deal with Mosaic.

The plot

Kay and Gerda were the best of friends, always together in their small Danish town, until one day the greatest and most wicked of the goblins made a mirror. Everything that was reflected in the glass appeared horrible, but when the goblins tried to take the mirror to Heaven it shattered, showering the earth with its fragments.

Now one of these tiny slivers made its way into Kay's eye and suddenly he became as cold as a stone as the evil worked its terrible distortions. And when, one day as he was playing in the snow, a magnificent sleigh came by, he tied his little sledge to it and was dragged away. Unable to recognise good from evil, he was soon seduced by its driver and became a captive of the terrible Snow Queen.

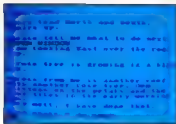
In the village the people said that Kay had drowned. But Gerda refused to believe that he could be dead and one morning vowed to search for her friend...

Gameplay

Unusually for an adventure, you play a female character, Gerda... or rather you advise Gerda. She has a mind of her own and sometimes she'll do as she wishes. At one point your advice gets her understandably annoyed and when you try to interrupt the scrolling instructions you'll be put

firmly in your place – until she needs your help again!

The first problem is a traditional one – how to leave the house. I was initially disappointed to find so commonplace a beginning, but when I had the answer all became clear.



The initial puzzle teaches you to think of Gerda as a real person. Unless you ask her to do everything you would expect her to, she won't even start her quest. And unlike many adventures, most objects are not signposted here, so think carefully about your surroundings.

To help you on your way there's an abridged version of the story included and careful reading provides a host of clues, but the ladies of St Brides have carefully interwoven new puzzles, which call for more traditional adventure deduction, into the narrative.

At times you'll find that a little common-sense will take you on a linear course through the story, while at others you'll be racking your brain because you know what you need to do to continue – you just don't know how to do it!

Not that restrictions in vocabulary are going to hinder you. There's a useful list of words on the inlay, which may contain clues, and some quite sophisticated sentences are allowed for an adventure originated with *The Quill*. You can *Look Under* and *Through things* as well as *Examining* them, and you'll need to do a bit of the latter.

My one complaint was the absence of a *Ram Save*, for though you can't get killed you might get sent back to your Grandmother and an end to your adventuring career!

As expected from St B's it's all very atmospheric and literate with some simple, suitably story book illustrations; and spots of pleas-

antly melancholy theme music. It's both funny and full of mystery – and it's wholly convincing.

Don't let the fact that this is based on a 'fairy tale' and distinctly un-macho put you off. It's a welcome change from the norm. Instead let yourself fall under *The Snow Queen's* spell.

Tips on playing

● Can't leave the house? Then read the story carefully, look everywhere and remember that cleanliness is next to godliness!

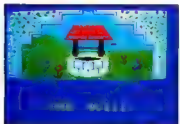
● Gerda will soon be feeling hungry but doesn't have the dough to buy bread. Finders may be keepers but honesty pays dividends so search for a lost purse.

● Trouble with the tear-away rough girls? If Gerda's got a present to bribe them with her journey can continue.

● Attention to the story should get Gerda to the old lady's house – but getting out again isn't so easy!

● Talking to the flowers will help, and to the birds, but Gerda will have to persevere with her reading if she's to get the clue that will open her eyes.

● In the garden an apparently useless



investigation may well pay dividends later so long as Gerda collects a nest egg from the tree.

● At last everything's coming up roses, but how can Gerda open the gate? Obviously somebody has the key but you won't find it if he's gone into town, will you?

● Outside the city returning something to the Raven that's rightly his will win a friend. And don't neglect to reflate your economy with some fruit from a nursery rhyme tree.

● Loitering in the city at night isn't advisable so find the inn before you go bumping into the palace guard.

John Minson



The Snow Queen is available for the Spectrum and Commodore, cost £9.95 from Mosaic Software, 187 Upper Street, London N1 1RQ. A hint sheet to take you further in the adventure is available from Snow Queen Dept, St Brides School, Burtonport, County Donegal, Ireland.

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Telescopic vision

Tony Kendle provides some tips for those wanting to enjoy the complexities of Mercenary, plus listings to help you sail through Starion and Nightshade

It's always fascinating to see just which games provoke the most reaction from our readers, and certainly the one that seems to have struck the deepest chord with Commodore and Atari owners is *Mercenary*. Following our solution to the game published a few weeks ago I have had yet another letter from someone eager to point out aspects and complexities that we had missed.

Steve Baker of Barry in South Glamorgan has these four extra tips:

- 1 The Anti-Time bomb does not just stop destroying buildings, it also allows you to re-build a destroyed building by firing at it. This makes it possible to correct mistakes and play the game indefinitely.
 - 2 If you are being attacked by a Paylor or a mechanoid ship fly backwards. This tactic makes it very easy to avoid them.
 - 3 If you are being attacked and cannot destroy the enemy, land and get out the ship. Doing this will mean that when you are hit the ship is not destroyed and you can get back in it.
 - 4 You have mentioned that you can transport yourself down from the space station using the door with the symbol on it in the laboratory. However, when you come out in the land base you will find that everything is now displayed in a mirror image and you will need to look at your map in reverse. (This works on the Atari version anyway).
- Well, thanks for the extra help, Steve. *Mercenary* seems to have combined those elusive qualities of immediate fun, good graphics and sufficient strategy to keep people coming back even after they have

finished it. The only thing wrong is that it isn't available on more machines, and I suggest that all Spectrum owners, etc, should barrage Novogen with complaining letters.

As promised the other week, here is another welcome communication from our correspondents Julian Lyndon-Smith and Kean "Suggsy" Johnson who together are Hackers Unlimited. Before we get on and publish their latest Amstrad Pokes, this time for *Nightshade* and *Starion*, we have a message from the pair.

Working routine

"We are looking for someone overseas to join Hackers Unlimited so that we can have some sort of contact over in the UK. Could you please ask anyone who thinks that they have the qualifications (presumably an interest in Amstrad hacking) to write to us at: JM Lyndon-Smith, 83 High Street, Berea, Johannesburg, South Africa, or Kean Johnston P.O. Box 12063, Benoryn, 1504, Transvaal South Africa.

"The first routine, listing 1, is for the fantastic game *Starion* which seems to have frustrated nearly everyone since it was released. The cheat routine will cause your "Hull Temp" to remain constant thus eliminating 95% of the likelihood of your demise. To run the cheat, rewind the tape to the start, press play and *Run* listing 1 which will automatically skip the basic loader.

"Do not worry about the screen display - if your monitor displays garbage then the routine is working.

Listing 2 - Infinite Lives for Nightshade

```
10 REM *** From Hackers Unlimited ***
20 MODE 1:INK 0,0:INK 1,0:INK
   INK 3,15: BORDER 0: MEMORY 0: 12FF
   30 LOAD: "nolc", 0: 1300: CALL 0: 1300:
   LOAD: " ", 0: 1300: POKE 0: 0F03, 0:
   CALL 0: 1300
```

"Because of the large number of data statements, we have included a checksum at the end of each line which should ensure accurate typing.

"Listing 1 gives infinite lives for *Nightshade*. Again rewind the tape to the start and run the routine, although this time the game will appear to load and run as normal."

Can I just remind you of the Hackers' promise that anyone having trouble using the Pokes for the tape version of *Sorcery* can blame it on changes in the hardware compared to their 464's. A revised routine will be delivered soon.

Unique background

Martech has released one of its strongest titles to date with *This Planet's*, a program that combines gameplay with "education" in a more successful way than ever before. In fact the educational content really works to add a unique background and depth of interest to the game rather than being the reverse; a way to sweeten the medicine with a game. It's certainly a good compromise to look for if your parents/partner keep asking why you don't do something useful with your Spectrum rather than just playing *Bomb Jack*.

Of particular interest is an announcement that Martech is planning a competition based on the game. "Within the program are a number of clues for the solution of the very difficult 'Alien Game' and we thought that the first person to manage it deserves a prize. We thought it would be appropriate to offer a telescope."

Media astronomer, and consultant to Martech, Heather Couper will choose the particular model but it is promised to be high quality. If anyone does solve it in the near future contact Martech immediately, or us if you don't have the address.

Listing 1 - Constant Hull Temp for Starion

```
10 REM *** Starion - Cracked by Hackers Unlimited ***
20 MODE 1:INK 0,0:INK 1,0:INK 3,15: BORDER 0
30 MEMORY 0: 12FF: LOAD: "loader", 0: 0000
40 ADD: 0: 0000: FOR I=100 TO 120 STEP 10
50 FOR dat=1 TO 21: READ a$: a$=VAL("&" + a$): POKE add, a$: tot=tot+a$: add=add+1: NEXT
60 READ a$: a$=VAL("&" + a$): IF tot > a$ THEN PRINT "Data error in line " + I: I=I+1: NEXT
70 tot=0: NEXT: tot=0: add=0: 0000
80 FOR dat=1 TO 21: READ a$: a$=VAL("&" + a$): POKE add, a$: tot=tot+a$: add=add+1: NEXT
90 IF tot <> 0: 0001 THEN PRINT "Data error in line " + I: 130: END ELSE CALL 0: 0000
100 DATA 00, 00, 32, 45, 00, 32, 51, 00, 21, 00, 00, 00, 11, 00, FF, 01, FF, 00, ED, 00,
    21, 7B, 0722
110 DATA 02, 11, 00, A4, 3E, 99, CD, A1, 8C, 3E, C9, 32, AA, 06, 21, 00, FF, E5, 21,
    00, 00, 00B7
120 DATA 11, 00, 3E, 3E, 99, C3, A1, 8C, 00, 00, 00, 00, 00, 00, 00, 00, 00, 00, 00,
    00, 00, 0346
130 DATA 21, 7B, 02, 11, 00, 00, 01, 00, A4, F3, ED, 00, C3, 2B, FF, 00, 00, 00, 00,
    00, 00, 05D1
```


Degenerate criminals

How do you write a brilliant game? Start with superb, animated graphics, add some great background music and sound effects, stir in some fine arcade action, a tricky puzzle, and fast gameplay under joystick control. Right?

Right. Enter *Nexus*, the first game from Nexus – a new software house made up of several former Beyond people. You are a reporter sent into the HQ of a Colombian drug baron. Your mission is twofold – first, find your friend who is being held captive there; second, get the real story behind this degenerate criminal empire.

You're up against a massive organisation, but on your side you have Nexus, an underground organisation which has infiltrated the complex. Its members will supply you with guns, a camera, and security passes to gain access to different areas.

If you don't have the right pass for each area you can still operate – but keep an eye open

for the guards and a finger on your stun gun trigger. You need to search hundreds of rooms and corridors to find your friend, and the 128 bits of information you need for your story. You also score extra points for taking pictures.

Gameplay is a sort of cross between *Impossible Mission* and *Enigma Force*, combining the best elements of both. The screen is split into several sections – an animated window which shows the action, a larger map of each corridor showing your current position; two areas for displaying digitised mugshots of Nexus agents; a message area showing conversation between yourself and other characters; and a



Ultimate back on form

Those days when Ultimate releases were eagerly awaited have well and truly gone (the disappointment of *Cyberun* saw ■ that) – but with the release of *Pentagram*, there are definite signs that the doldrums at Ashby-de-la-Zouch may be over.

On loading the game, you are presented with the now very familiar single colour 3-D side-on display à la *Knight Lore*. While it's certainly another arcade/puzzle/adventure in the classic Ultimate style, on playing it, I was captivated by the deviousness of the tricks, the humour and atmosphere created by the various sprites and graphics – plus the fact that this one is going to be very, very tricky to complete.

The scenario is, as usual, fairly vague. You control the sabreman in his quest for the pentagram, and the inlay is covered with assorted mumbo jumbo, which, I expect, contains various clues too deep for me to fathom.

Controls are rotate left/right, walk, jump, pick up/drop (if

haven't found anything I can do this to yet) and, yippee, fire, supported via keyboard, or Kempston, Cursor and Interface II joystick. Yes, you can zap things, and you'll find you can zap ■.

If you hang around in a location long enough, you are attacked by witches on broomsticks, zombies, amoeba, and the most realistic looking bed mites I have ever seen.

As for the main quest, well, who knows how you are going to go about solving it – so far I've got nowhere... but the feeling of 'I'll-just-have-one-more-go is still there.

Don't expect to be stunned by the originality of presentation – but lovers of *Knight Lore* et al will not be disappointed here.

John Cook

Program: Pentagram Micro
Spectrum 48K (128K compatible) Price £9.95 Supplier
US Gold, 10, Heneage St,
Parkway Industrial Centre,
Birmingham.

large block which tells you what actions are possible, and what you find in different locations.

You can also call up a separate screen which allows you to change weapons, take pictures, review your score or – in dire straits – restart the game.

One feature missing, and it's a major omission, is the facility ■ save a game in progress. Nexus says this couldn't be implemented on the 64 version, although it will be used in other versions. After much practice, however, it should be possible to complete the game in one session.

My other reservation is whether there is sufficient vari-

ety in play to maintain interest over a long period, but the fight sequences are great fun as your hero somersaults, slides, rolls, punches and drop-kicks his way past the opposition. Or shoot them – simpler but rather unporting.

Nexus deserves to be a big hit and it is a first-class debut for this new software house. Arcade fans should snap it up.

Peter Worlock

Program Nexus Micro
Commodore 64 Price £9.95 cassette, £12.95 disc Supplier
Nexus Productions, DSB
House, 30 High Street,
Beckenham, Kent BR2 1AY.

Burning rubber

It's a jungle out there. The city is overrun with drug pushers, hi-leams cruise the streets and Mr Big is running the stuff into town ■ armoured cars. Faced with problems like these the city fathers had to turn to you.

The equipment you're given isn't a bazooka, half a dozen tank traps and a squad of National Guard, however – it's a 150 mph Lotus Turbo Esprit. It also houses a 20mm cannon (and you thought it was a cigar lighter) powerful enough to make the question "do you feel lucky, punk?" somewhat academic.

Armed with the above kit, you burn rubber up and down the city streets searching for the drug dealers. These can ■ recognised by their red, black and white cars while innocent traffic is blue or yellow.

To intercept them you have to scream through the streets, checking their position every now and then on your comput-

erised map. You can then carry out a summary Judge Dredd-style execution with the cannon, or score extra points by arresting them by bumping them from the rear.

The racing simulation part of the game is fairly rudimentary – you've no gears, and steer from lane to lane with joystick left and right. You have to stop at a garage to refuel every now and again, and have four cars to use.

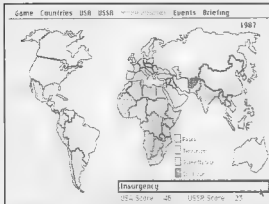
Maybe it's the peculiar plot, but I found this one difficult to relate to. I feel that too much of the game is spent intercepting the opposition, and not enough in actually grabbing them when you've tracked them down. I'm afraid I don't feel driven to buy this one...

John Lettice

Program Turbo Esprit Micro
Amstrad Price £8.50 Supplier
Durell Software, Castle
Lodge, Castle Green,
Taunton.



Diplomatic crisis



The evolution of computer games has been dramatic – in a few years we've gone from crude Invaders-type shoot 'em ups to *Elite*; from the imaginative but patchy graphics of *Manic Miner* to the superb animation of *Impossible Mission*; and from the moronic parsers of early adventures to the intelligence of Infocom games.

This year has seen a similar breakthrough in strategy games with the release of *Balance of Power* on the Macintosh. Written by Chris Crawford (of *Eastern Front* and *Legionnaire* fame), *Balance of Power* goes further than any other game in putting the real world inside your computer.

The object of the game is simple: to increase your coun-

try's prestige around the world without provoking a nuclear war. If you launch a nuclear strike, you lose. If your opponent launches a nuclear strike, you lose. If either side causes an accidental nuclear war, you lose.

You gain prestige by supporting friendly governments and trying to subvert hostile ones. Throughout the game, different countries will endure civil wars and revolutions – you support the side which will favour your country.

You can choose to play against the computer or against another human, controlling either the USA or the USSR. The best games are against the computer.

The game runs from 1986 to 1994 and each turn takes a

year. In the Beginner level, your choices are simple: ship arms to a government or its rebel opposition, or – more drastically – send in your own troops to support one side.

When each side has made its plans for the year, the opponent can question and oppose them. Initially, this takes the form of a quiet chat between the two nations. If neither side will back down, it becomes a diplomatic crisis and prestige is at stake. If things escalate to a military crisis, even more prestige is on the line and the risk of nuclear holocaust increases.

The game is won or lost on crisis management. You must pick your fights carefully and the computer plays a very intelligent game, so bluff and bluster will rarely succeed.

In higher levels of play, you

have increasing options such as using economic aid to win friends and influence people, sending in the CIA or KGB to provoke anti-government incidents, using your diplomatic corps to sway public opinion, and making treaties.

Balance of Power is a game of unsurpassed excellence. It has intelligence, subtlety and an enormous amount of detail – and in key confrontations the suspense is killing.

Although at present versions are available only for the Mac and IBM PC, an Atari ST version is likely.

Peter Warlock

Program *Balance of Power*
Micro Macintosh 128 Price
£26.95 **Supplier** Mirrorsoft,
Purnell Book Centre,
Paulton, Bristol BS18 5LQ.

Tomato purée

Take cover! The Killer Tomatoes are on the loose! Prepare yourself to be sterilised with fear (it says here) as you plunge into the squishiest game ever, *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes*.

Based on the winner of one of the coveted Turkey movie awards, the game could well have been as much of a turkey as the film. However, *Tomatoes* is saved by a whacky sense of humour and a challenging game method.

You play Wimp Plasbott (?), unremarkable vegetable processing operative, who clocks on at the PuraTom plant one day to find that the tomatoes have mutated. Moving through umpty-several screens shown in the familiar 45-degree perspective, you must help Wimp to stun rogue tomatoes by jumping on them,

pick them up and carry them to the crusher, then deliver tomato purée to the pizza parlor. But... beware of the KILLER TOMATOES!

Fast and deadly, they can only be defeated by weapons found around the factory – but I haven't yet found out how to destroy them.

With so many companies bringing out turkeys unintentionally, it's good to see Global making such fun out of a deliberately ridiculous scenario. I'm looking forward to seeing the game of *Absolute Beginners*...

Chris Jenkins

Program *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes* Micro Spectrum
48K Price £7.95 **Supplier**
Global Software, PO Box 87,
London SW11 1BS.

Elves and spells

Where to begin, faced with value which is outstanding even for the budget labels' budget label. Central Solutions? There's nothing amazingly good... but nothing amazingly bad either, for which we must thank the over popular *Quill*.

You could almost see this as a survey of mainstream adventuring. There's a predominance of elves and spells and quests for mystical rings – the usual blame-it-on-Tolkien stuff. Then there's a pirate treasure hunt; a dream world made true; some sci-fi, etc, etc.

From my quick overview, the games all seemed to demonstrate reasonable competence.

Some showed humour; others generated atmosphere with lengthy preambles.

So do you buy? The question is whether you can stand to play another *Quill*-ed adventure without screaming. If you can and you don't expect the state of the art but are merely looking for a diversion, then you won't go far wrong.

John Minson

Program *10 Adventure Game Pack Vol 2* Micro
Spectrum 48K Price £6.95
Supplier Central Solutions
Ltd, 500 Chesham House,
150 Regent Street, London
W1R 5FA.





Water, water everywhere

Tony Bridge dons his lifebelt to look at some nautical adventures

Avast me hearties, splice the timbers and shiver me mainbrace – or, er... sorry about the lapse into Newtonese, but there's a definite nautical flavour to The Corner this week, brought about by four Quill'd programs, the first three for the Commodore 64.

Eye of Java is one that has been lying around on my desk for several weeks now, and I'm afraid that I have a confession to make – the name and address of the author have been mislaid, and appear nowhere in the program itself! If the author reads this please get in touch so that I can pass on your name.

The adventure is text-only of course, white on blue; the scenario is standard issue – "find the *Eye of Java* in the depths of the castle, then destroy the evil siren". There's a lot of exploring to do on the beach, which is where you start off – several caves are repositories of valuable items.

Changing light

The atmosphere is quite nicely handled, with some evocative descriptions of the seashore and the various caves: a touch that I particularly liked was the way time seems to pass as you revisit locations. As

the day wears on, so the descriptions reflect the changing light. Quill'd adventures need touches such as this to prevent them falling into the "formula"; although I haven't had time to explore the whole of this adventure, I'd like the author to contact me, if possible with a map, so that I can see more and pass on more comments to readers.

From Jon White of Hallmark Software comes *Rescue Party*, the second of our Quill'd Commodore games (both of which are on disc). Again, the player is plonked on to a desert island, this time after a massive volcanic explosion. As usual (I don't know why), you don't seem to know who you are, or what you're doing here, but you can bet your sweet bippy that before you get home ■ *East Enders*, you're going to have a few problems! You are told your task: to find two adventurers lost together on an important historical find.

Rather than discovering yourself on the beach, this time you are in a small boat, and the first few problems take place in the cramped conditions on board. Examining locations yields several useful objects, among which are batteries and a torch. And, surprise, surprise, Jon White has, of course, like every adventure-writer before

him, included the dark place which follows every discovery of a torch, so the first move is to insert the batteries into the torch. This is quite possible – but switching the torch on does not yield the desired result. Obviously dead batteries, and what's this here? The galley offers up a warm stove, so I tried popping the batteries therein, in the hope that they might be warmed into life; no go, I'm afraid.

Without the torch, the player can't get up on deck, so after a quick look, I'm stymied. However, this start is promising, with rather short descriptions, but sensible and enthralling problems. I'm sure that the adventure must get even more engrossing later on and hope to bring you an update on my progress. Write to Hallmark Software, 122 Springhills, Harlow, Essex CM20 1TB.

Sound effects

I have always associated Colleen Software with programs for the Amstrad machines, but now they have moved across to the Commodore with a text adventure, *Mystery Voyage*. It may not contain any pictures, but there is an awful lot of sound effects and music to keep the player occupied. James Molloy of Colleen tells me that

Adventure Helpline

Terraform on Spectrum. How do I open the spaceship's exit hatch? John Richards, 12 The Willows, Selsey, W. Sussex, PO20 0UT.

The Pawn on QL. How do I get past the alchemists. How to get planks? What are tree stumps and garden tools for? J. P. Walker, 12 Moss Rise, The Mount, Mapperley, Nottingham, NG3 6GG.

Se-Kae of Assiah on Spectrum. I cannot get past the dwarf to enter the crystal palace. B. Clippson, 8 Marrams Avenue, Cromer, Norfolk.

Stolen Camp on BBC B. How do you get the key from the key box? Daniel Tilley, 4 St Bernard Road, Colchester, Essex (Tel 843220).

Gremkins on Spectrum. How do you kill the gremkins and what is needed? Andrew Taylor, 85 Edward Street, Grimsby, S. Humberside.

Sphinx Adventure on Electron. No progress. Any help most welcome. Robert Davies, 2H Rectory Road, Salford, Crumlin, Gwent, S. Wales.

Zim Salabin on Commodore 64. How do you get into the palace? Any other help gratefully received. T. Stokes, 85 Lower Drayton Lane, Drayton, Portsmouth, PO6 2HE.

Heavy on the Magick on Spectrum. Password for Quadra Porta, Dave Jones, 12 York Close, Beckton, London E6 4QN.

Lords of Time on Amstrad. I can't get past the cavemen. Jane Fisher, New Hall, Cambridge CB3 0DF.

Red Moon on Amstrad. How do I create the bridge? I've got the acorn and the scroll. Jane Fisher, New Hall, Cambridge CB3 0DF.

Classic Adventure on MSX. I have all 15 treasures, but I can't find the end of the game – what next? I have scored 150/210 Michele Drabwell, 17 The Gladeway, Waltham Abbey, Essex.

Adventure Helpline

Going bananas? If you are stuck in an Adventure with nowhere to turn do not despair – help is at hand.

Fill in the coupon, explaining your problem, send it to us, and a fellow adventurer may be able to help.

Remember – the system only works if those adventurers who have solved the puzzles get in touch. Every week is Save An Adventurer Today (SAAT) week!

Adventure..... on (Micro)
Problem.....
Name.....
Address.....

these were created with their new package, *The Colleen Music Compendium*, to be released at the PCW show in September. The results, as previewed in this adventure, are very interesting for Commodore owners.

The opening scene of *Mystery Voyage* has the almost lifelike voice of the ship's captain shouting "man the lifeboats" and other such social niceties. The screen clears and then you find yourself adrift on a raft in the blazing sun: it's a simple matter to paddle ashore, and then you're on a beach again. For some reason, beaches hold a strange fascination for adventure-writers: I suppose the first lot of a few million grains of sand looks much like the next, which lets the writer off the hook when it comes to writing a good, meaty description. Back at the *Voyage*, your exploration of the beach is accompanied by some great music, and some not-so-great sound effects. The effects themselves are well-done, the problem is the frequency of the effects: for example, visiting a certain doom-laden location means sitting through several seconds of ghostly doom-laden suspense chords. OK the first time and a help in creating the atmosphere, but at subsequent hearings, extremely frustrating.

Apart from this, the adventure cracks along at a good rate - although I poked a bit of fun at the "beach locations", quite a good deal of atmosphere is present, and

the adventure develops well with new locations presenting new problems. Some of these problems can get rather tasteless: at one point, you stumble upon a maggot-ridden corpse, and closer examination reveals - your breakfast. I'm afraid! The resulting pool of vomit (I know, it's disgusting, isn't it?), can be examined, but I wouldn't recommend it.

Mystery Voyage is an interesting romp, with a lot of atmosphere and although the music can sometimes become irritating, there's no denying that it is accomplished with a certain style. The spelling of my copy is rather atrocious, but I imagine that this will have been thoroughly checked by release date. The adventure is in three parts, with passwords into the second and third parts, but the asking price of £14.95 is a bit steep to say the least.

Tiresome chore

Available now for the CBM 64/128 and later for the Atari and Amstrad ranges, it's worth looking at if Colleen take the necessary action. Contact Colleen Software, Bishop Street, Penygraig, CF40 1PQ or telephone Tonyandy (0443) 434846.

The final sailor's delight this week is from the experienced Quill of Torrance and Liddle, whose previous effort, *Subsunk*, was one of the most under-rated adventures of '85. The sequel, *Seabase Delta*, is now available from Firebird in their silver 199 range, and it's even better.

Documents found on a body in the first location reveal that a missile is aimed at the "British base and will fire as planned". That's it as far as scene-setting goes, but presumably, you must get your finger out and somehow stop the missile. Also on or about the body, you'll find a card of the type which, in adventures, are just asking to be inserted in a slot somewhere. Sure enough, the card is the secret to getting about in the seabase: in the travel tube is a car waiting for you. The pretty tedious sequence of *Wear (seat) Belt, Insert Card* must be gone through each time you want to travel, and the time taken for whooshing sound effects (covering up the computer's processing time) all adds up to a rather tiresome chore that unfortunately just has to be put up with. There are quicker ways of travelling, luckily - for example, an elevator will take you from this first level up to the second, and a quick slide down a mail-chute will get you back.

The illustrations are pretty good, though re-drawing them on each visit to a location adds to the frustration, but the authors can't be accused of being stingy with the objects, as you'll stumble over dozens of 'em. You can't carry them all of course, so they must be used wisely and in the proper sequence.

All in all, then, a good game, with plenty of humour, lots of easily-visited locations, lots of objects and plenty of problems (not all easy) to be chewed over.

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C things differently

Leon Heller kicks off our series on computer languages with an introductory article on C

Until comparatively recently, C has had a reputation for being something of a "cult" language, used mainly under the Unix operating system on minicomputers like the PDP-11 by people in university computer science departments. Being a fairly simple, concise language, C can be implemented quite easily on micros, even low-cost home computers, which are not very different in terms of power and memory capacity from the minicomputers on which it was first developed.

The history of C

Like a lot of other good things (such as the transistor) C comes from AT & T Bell Labs. In the US. The language has a British ancestry, in that it is based on BCPL, a language developed at the Cambridge University Computer Laboratory, which is still in use today.

Dennis Ritchie, ■ Bell Labs, first designed a language called B, which was quite close to BCPL. This was further developed into C, as we know it today. In fact, for a brief period, the language was called NB, standing for Not B!

The C philosophy

C is a general-purpose programming language which encourages the writing of concise, efficient programs. The actual language itself is quite small, with most of the functions (such as input/output) that are part of other languages, provided in the form of a library. C is often used as a "systems programming language", for writing operating systems (Unix is written in C), compilers (most C compilers are written in C), text editors, etc., and has been described as a "low-level" high-level language, in that it allows the programmer to operate directly on bytes, numbers and machine addresses. However, since most implementations have floating point, and allow complex data structures to be manipulated with ease, C is also ideal for so-called applications programming — accounting packages, stock control, etc.

How the language is implemented

C is usually implemented as a "compiler", that is, a program (source code) is translated by the C compiler, into machine code (object code), which may then be executed. Interpreters, like Basic, take the program, a statement at a time, check each statement to make sure it is valid according to the "rules" of the language, and then execute it, usually by a call to a

machine language subroutine. Since compilers check the program only once, at the compilation stage, compiled programs run much faster than interpreted programs.

Some C compilers translate the program into assembly language, which is then assembled, generating object code, and so-called "relocatable" object modules are often produced. These are then linked, with a library, to produce an executable program, but the end result is the same — a stand-alone machine language program. Compiled programs typically run very much faster than interpreted programs, and have the added advantage that the code cannot be "broken into" by the user, and modified, without a great deal of trouble. Copy protection is also much easier to achieve.

Programming in C

C programs are built-up from functions (which may or may not return a value), which are similar to subroutines. A program must contain one function, where execution commences, which is called "main". Main usually calls other functions, either in the same program, or in external libraries, here is a simple program:

```
/* a simple program */
#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
    puts("A simple program");
    exit(0);
}
puts(a)
char a[];
{
    int i;
    i = 0;
```



```
while (a[i] != '\0')
    putchar(a[i] + 1);
```

The first line is a comment. Comments are enclosed by "/*" and "*/", and may be placed anywhere in a program, and may extend over several lines. The second line is an instruction to the pre-processor (a program that runs before the compiler) to include the header file `stdio.h`.

This header file usually contains definitions of constants, variables and macros used by the I/O library. All instructions to the pre-processor are prefixed by a hash sign.

Next comes the main function, which has no parameters, hence the empty brackets. The body of the function is enclosed in braces (curly brackets), and the

continued over the page ▶

Special C offer

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Languages

first statement outputs the string "A simple program", and the second statement results in the termination of the program, via the library function exit.

The zero parameter means that no error code is to be passed back to the operating system. Each statement in C is terminated by a semi-colon. Several statements may be placed on a line, although this is usually regarded as bad practice by most C aficionados, as it can make programs difficult to read.

Although a *puts* function is provided with most compilers, there is nothing at all to stop you writing your own, which we have done here. This time, the function does have a parameter, the character array (which is how strings are represented in C) called *s*.

Strings are terminated by a null byte, represented by '0', so the *puts* function keeps outputting characters from the string, until the terminating null byte is reached. $i++$ is the same as $i = i + 1$, which could have been used, instead. There are many other concise ways of doing things in C.

C is a "typed" language, in that all variables must be declared to the compiler before use, as integer, floating point, character, etc.

Experienced C programmers tend to use "pointers", which are variables that contain the addresses of other variables, rather than array subscripts, as in the

above example. The *puts* function may be re-written using pointers as:

```
put(s)
char *s;
{
    while (*s) putchar(*s++);
}
```

This will probably generate more efficient code, and is more concise, if harder to understand. Other useful features of the language are that variables (like *i* in the first example) defined within a function are "local" to that function, and may be used elsewhere without any problems.

Variables defined outside any function are "globals". C allows you to put various different data items, such as a person's name, address and age, into one "structure", and deal with it as a single entity - very useful for commercial programming.

More about C

Whatever other books you get, a copy of *The C Programming Language* by Kernighan and Ritchie (usually abbreviated to K & R) is essential, although it is rather expensive. It's very well written and is still the best book for learning the language. Sunshine Publications, the publisher of this magazine, also have a book out currently, called *The C Compendium* by David Lawrence and Mark England (£12.95), for both beginners and those wishing to expand their knowledge.

Buyers' Guide

Program HiSoft C Micro Spectrum Price £25.00 **Supplier** Hi-Soft, 180 High St, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, Tel (0562) 696421

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Programming: Amstrad

```

2650 C=C+1:GOTO 2620
2650 MEND
2660 CLOSE IN
2670 N$(C1)=E$:RETURN: REM CLOSE UP AND G
Q HOME
2680 REM
2690 REM *****
2700 REM * End Program *
2710 REM *****
2720 REM
2730 CLR:PRINT* END PROGRAM *:PRINT
2740 MODE 1:PRINT:PRINT*WARNING*.....
"
2750 PRINT:PRINT*IS ALL YOUR DATA SAVED
. ? (Y/N)*
2760 AS=INKEY$:IF AS="" THEN 2760
2770 IF AS="N" THEN RETURN
2780 IF AS="Y" THEN END: REM GOOD BYE...
2790 REM
2800 REM *****
2810 REM * Output Address List *
2820 REM *****
2830 REM
2840 CLR:PRINT:PRINT* OUTPUT ADDRESS LI
ST * :PRINT
2850 IF LND THEN PRINT*List Empty...*:FO
R T=0 TO 120:NEXT T:RETURN
2860 PRINT "Set Printer to Top of Paper"
:PRINT
2870 LOCATE 1,25:PRINT*Press Space Bar t
o Continue..*
2880 AS=INKEY$:IF AS="" THEN 2880
2890 IF AS="" THEN 2880

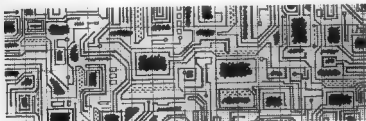
```

```

2900 C=1
2910 IF N$(C1)=E$ THEN PRINT N$.Total:=
+C1:PRINT N$,C$(C2):C$(C2):RETURN
2920 PRINT N$, N$(C1) " "A$(C1) " "A2
$(C1) " "A$(C1) " "A$(C1)
2930 C=C+1:GOTO 2910
2940 REM
2950 REM *****
2960 REM * Output to Labels *
2970 REM *****
2980 REM
2990 CLR:PRINT:PRINT* OUTPUT TO LABELS
*:PRINT
3000 IF C=0 THEN PRINT*List Empty...*:FO
R T=0 TO 120:NEXT T:RETURN
3010 PRINT "Set Printer to Top of Label"
:PRINT
3020 LOCATE 1,25:PRINT*Press Space Bar t
o Continue..*
3030 AS=INKEY$:IF AS="" THEN 3030
3040 IF AS="" THEN 3030
3050 C=C+1: REM SET COUNTER
3060 IF N$(C1)=E$ THEN RETURN
3070 PRINT N$,N$(C1)
3080 PRINT N$,A$(C1)
3090 PRINT N$,A$(C1)
3100 PRINT N$,A$(C1)
3110 PRINT N$,A$(C1)
3120 FOR SP=1 TO 3:PRINT N$, C$(C1):LINE
AT SP: REM SET SP: COUNT FOR SPACE BETWEEN
LABELS
3130 C=C+1:GOTO 2960

```

Programming: C64



PROTECTOR

by David Shaw

My Protector program for the CBM 64 addresses the less publicised but still important area of the piracy of programming methods.

While Protector does not provide protection from copying, it completely hides any Basic or Basic and machine code program, producing a version that will list simply as one SYS call.

To reveal the actual program is probably impossible without a reasonable knowledge of machine code and how Basic is stored in memory. Despite listing as one SYS call, the program can be run and saved as normal once protected.

To further increase the usefulness of the program I have included run/stop-restore and hardware reset switch protection (the reset protection is only present for programs under 32K long). Once run the program is almost unstoppable and when used in conjunction with one of the many published auto-run routines, protection of commercial quality can be achieved.

To protect a program use the following steps.

- 1) Type in or load up a saved copy of the PROTECTOR listing and RUN it.
- 2) Type in or load the program.
- 3) Add the following two lines to the program (they must be line numbers zero and one and must contain no spaces). It is vital

that line one contains 67 asterisks, so count carefully or the routine will not work.

0 SYS2063

1**** etc. up to 67 asterisks

- 4) Enter Sys49152 in direct mode to execute the protection routine and a message

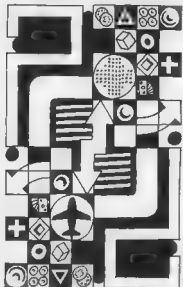
will appear telling you the program is now fully protected.

It is advisable to save the protected program at this point because once run you will be unable to break out of the program.

```

10 REM *****PROTECTOR*****
20 REM *****DAVID SHAW*****
30 REM *****#BOKINGHART*****
40 FORT=8TO194:PEAB:CS=CS+A:POKE49152+T,A:HEX
50 IFCS<19014THENPRINT"DATA ERROR":END
100 DATA162.9,189.35,192.232,157.14.8
101 DATA224.67,209,245,169.9,141.11.8
102 DATA141.12.8,162.8,189,102,192.32
103 DATA210,255,232,224.33,208,245.96
104 DATA164.46,192,128,16,35,169,195,141
105 DATA4,128,169,194,141.5,128,169,205
106 DATA141.6,128,169,56,141.7,128,169
107 DATA8,141.8,128,169,70,141.8,128
108 DATA169,8,141.1,128,169,193,141,24
109 DATA3,169,254,141,25.3,169,83,133
110 DATA43,169,224,141,40,3,32,89,166
111 DATA76,174,167,0,32,84,72,69,32,80
112 DATA82,79,71,82,65,77,32,73,83,32
113 DATA78,79,87,32,70,85,76,76,89,32
114 DATA80,82,79,84,69,67,84,69,68,33
115 DATA32,32,32,32,84,82,89,32,76,73
116 DATA83,84,46,83,65,86,69,32,65,70
117 DATA68,32,82,85,79,32,84,72,69,32
118 DATA80,82,79,84,69,67,84,69,68,32
119 DATA80,82,79,71,82,65,77,32,65,83
120 DATA32,85,83,85,65,76,46
130 NEW

```

SLOW DOWN

by D Bridge

Risking being described perverse, this routine is designed to slow the QL. The impetus for writing it came from the purchase of additional memory, which I was pleased to find speeded the QL by some 20%, but in doing so moved some arcade games out of the category of "challenging" and into that of "too (blast-ed) difficult".

Software techniques for slowing a micro usually rely on introducing delays in the interrupt service routines. However, for multitasking machines another method may be used, that of creating an independent job able to adjust its own priority to "steal" processor time from all other jobs (and therefore to slow them).

The routine examines either the FS or /I key and when pressed, cycles through eight different preset priorities, issuing a beep or pitch related to that priority - a low

pitch corresponding to the routine itself having a high priority and therefore to all other tasks running slowly.

The range of speeds achieved (and keyboard response) will depend on the priorities and status of the other jobs, but assuming a single other (activated and not awaiting input) at its default priority of 32 (which is usually appropriate), then the new QL speeds are approximately: 97%, 88%, 80%, 70%, 60%, 50%, 40% and 25%.

Although not impossible to disable, the routine works on the games software I own (as well as basic and utilities). When done: the routine should be Execed.

Once any program is Execed (ie, the transient program area is no longer empty), then the resident procedure area can not be expanded. Therefore you must Exec the routine after any required Respres have been carried out.

```
100 REM: ***** SLOW IT *****
110 REM: ***** D.BRIDGE *****
120 GOSUB 2:PRINT "PLEASE WAIT":PRINT
130 ADDR=RESPC(20):POS=ADDR
140 IF LINE.ND=0:GOTO LINE_STEP:10:FLAG=0
150 GOTO 1:IF FLAG
160 S
170 MERRAT:GOTO 1
180 COUNT=COUNT+1
190 IF COUNT=1 THEN EXIT INNER
200 READ A
210 IF COUNT=11 THEN
220 IF C POS, A:POS=POS+1:SUM=SUM+A
230 GOTO 1
240 IF COUNT=11 THEN PRINT ERROR
250 GOTO 1
260 IF COUNT=11 THEN PRINT ERROR
270 EXIT INNER
280 END IF
290 END REPEAT INNER
300 IF CFS THEN EXIT OUTER
310 LINE.ND=LINE.ND+1:LINE_STEP
320 END REPEAT OUTER
330 IF COUNT=11 THEN IF COUNT=11 THEN PRINT ERROR
```

```
340 IF NOT FLAG THEN
350 INPUT "SELECT KEY: 1=FS 2=/I":A$
360 IF A$="1" THEN GOTO (ADDR+112):1
370 PRINT "SLOWING CODE"
380 GOSUB MERRAT:GOTO 1:51:ADDR=ADDR+100
390 END IF
400 GOTO 1
410 DEFINT PROCEDURE PRINT ERROR
420 PRINT "PRINT ERROR AT LINE: LINE.ND
430 END DEFINT PROCEDURE ERROR
1000 DATA 96,31,0,0,0,0,74,251,0,4,477
1010 DATA 97,76,79,87,116,1,114,259,112,11,954
1020 DATA 78,65,67,259,0,108,134,0,71,750,1011
1030 DATA 0,76,112,17,78,65,6,1,0,5,767
1040 DATA 105,240,82,6,2,1,10,0,0,0,7,574
1050 DATA 71,250,0,82,25,76,0,6,80,45,607
1060 DATA 0,6,112,17,78,65,69,241,104,8,700
1070 DATA 116,0,39,18,114,255,112,11,70,65,789
1080 DATA 69,241,104,0,122,0,56,30,62,66,702
1090 DATA 1,144,78,112,81,107,255,757,11,205,1417
1100 DATA 255,244,76,0,255,180,9,1,0,0,1040
1110 DATA 0,0,0,2,10,0,0,0,170,170,260
1120 DATA 1,0,0,0,0,5,0,0,1,0,7
1130 DATA 2,75,65,99,135,142,150,200,1,4,829
1140 DATA 8,14,21,32,48,98,0,0,219
```

Programming: Spectrum



BASIC AID

by Stephen Martin

This is a programming utility for the 48K ZX Spectrum which will aid Basic programmers. It will display in real time (as it happens) the following information.

(1) The most recently plotted X-

coordinate.

(2) The most recently plotted Y-coordinate.

(3) The ASCII code of the last key press, hence: Enter(13), A(65) etc.

(4) The first location of the Basic program (Prog) area.

(5) Current line number being executed. (If no program is running it will display zeros).

(6) The first location of the user definable graphics area. This is the equivalent of Print Us "a".

Programming: Spectrum

(7) The length of your Basic program. This is updated after a line is inserted or deleted.

(8) The free memory (Ram) remaining. The last two digits may flicker but the first three digits will always be clearly visible.

(9) The current value of *Ramtop*. This should be at least 64569.

As the Panel is interrupt driven, it will use the vector hook at \$FEFFFF0 so those programmers who use small patches of code in their Basic programs should take care where they organise their machine code. However, there is a small area between 65281 and 65367 vacant. Otherwise machine code should be placed so that it ends before 64570.

Once installed the panel can be activated by *Rand Usr 64570* and panel is switched off by *Rand Usr 64583*. In addition

to this the routine can also be used in non interrupt mode by *Rand Usr 64590* (the panel should be switched off before doing this). The routine can also be left in operation when loading a new Basic program. As the Spectrum will disable the routine, then once loading has commenced it will re-enable the panel.

Note that when editing program lines thick dotted lines may appear on the upper third of the screen below the panel. These should be removed by a CLS command. The effect of these lines is purely cosmetic and does not interfere with the operation of the foreground or background task.

Naturally before any of this happens the machine code for the utility must be entered! First *Rand Usr 0* to clear the memory. Then *Clear 64569*.

Listing 1 should now be entered and run

(this is the loader). On running the program will ask for a start address. Enter 64570 & press *Enter*. Next you will be asked the length. Enter 700. Enter the first number from the code dump, and repeat this process until you are asked for the checksum. Enter this and if all is well the next base location 64575 will be displayed and you should continue in a similar fashion until all the code has been entered.

If an error occurs then you will be returned by the program to the current base address again.

Having completed your task the code should be saved thus. *Save "INT-PAN"* Code 64570,700. Once saved the code should be verified. Now the moment of (interrupt driven) truth. *Rand Usr 64570*. And if all is well nine pieces of information should be displayed.

```

10: NEW CODE LOADER
20: CLS A: INPUT "START LOCATION"
30: INPUT "LENGTH OF CODE/DUMP"
40: LET LENGTH=0
50: FOR I=START TO START+LEN
60:   A: GET C
70:   LET C=ASC(C)
80:   PRINT TAB(10);
90:   PRINT TAB(10);
100:  IF C=CHR(10) THEN
110:    PRINT "PARAVISION PANE"
120:  END IF
130:  LET C=CHR(10)
140:  LET C=CHR(10)
150:  LET C=CHR(10)
160:  LET C=CHR(10)
170:  LET C=CHR(10)
180:  LET C=CHR(10)
190:  LET C=CHR(10)
200:  LET C=CHR(10)
210:  LET C=CHR(10)
220:  LET C=CHR(10)
230:  LET C=CHR(10)
240:  LET C=CHR(10)
250:  LET C=CHR(10)
260:  LET C=CHR(10)
270:  LET C=CHR(10)
280:  LET C=CHR(10)
290:  LET C=CHR(10)
300:  LET C=CHR(10)
310:  LET C=CHR(10)
320:  LET C=CHR(10)
330:  LET C=CHR(10)
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350:  LET C=CHR(10)
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990:  LET C=CHR(10)
1000: LET C=CHR(10)

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code dump

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64570 33 70 255 34 255 : 138
64571 255 64 254 237 71 : 178
64572 237 94 254 237 191 : 191
64573 237 71 237 60 201 : 166
64574 229 219 197 245 1 : 177
64575 151 254 237 18 33 : 166
64576 34 34 254 237 254 : 110
64577 205 237 253 1 161 : 171
64578 254 34 33 254 255 : 159
64579 237 253 1 171 255 : 183
64580 254 18 33 254 33 : 166
64581 34 230 254 205 237 : 193
64582 253 1 101 254 237 : 148
64583 20 33 12 64 34 : 38
64584 20 254 237 253 237 : 237
64585 1 191 254 22 10 : 95
64586 33 44 64 34 230 : 55
64587 254 205 237 18 33 : 166
64588 201 254 22 10 33 : 164
64589 78 64 34 205 254 : 133
64590 205 237 94 254 237 : 191
64591 254 22 9 33 23 : 60
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64593 237 253 20 254 237 : 193
64594 22 9 33 254 34 : 38
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MARBLE MANIA

by Shawn McAvery



This week, the bulk of the main listing for Marble Mania - also included is the extra data for screens four to six ... for when you've truly mastered

the first three!

As before - lesser hearts can obtain tape copies of the program from the author, at a cost of £3.00. Write to him at 83

Tipner Road, Starnshaw, Portsmouth, Hants, PO2 8QP. Note that in the Data statements, enter the single quote marks as pound signs (replace ' with £).

```

850 COLOUR3:FORN=2TO17:FORM=1TO18:FRIN
TTAB(M-1,17):H$(M,N):NEXT
860 FORN=25TO50STEP5:SOUND1,-9,N=2,1:S
OUND1,-9,N,1:NEXT
870 COLOUR1:VDU26:A=0:B=0:Y=784:RETURN

880 DEFPROCtime=
890 TH=240
900 FORN=200TO150STEP-5:SOUND1,9,N,1:N
EXT
910 VDU4:L=L-1:IF L<1 THEN GOTO 730
920 FORN=1TO1:PRINTAB(29+N,4):CHR$(254
930 CLS:A=0:B=0:X=640:Y=500
940 VDU20
950 GCOL 0,1
960 FORN=0TO1280STEP64:MOVEN,0:DRAWN,B
970 GCOL 1,3
980 MOVE 0,0:DRAW 1279,0:DRAW 1279,896
:DRAW 0,896:DRAW0,0
990 PRINTAB(0,1)"To go back to the ma
in menu just guide the ball off the gra
d."
1000 GCOL3,3:VDU5
1010 MOVEX,Y:VDU254
1020 MOVEX,Y:VDU254:X=X+A:Y=Y+B:MOVEX,Y
:VDU254
1030 A=A+(INKEY(-96) AND A>-12)-(INKEY(
-67) AND A<12)
1040 B=B+(INKEY(-105) AND B>-12)-(INKEY
(-73) AND B<12)
1050 IF (X<0 OR X>1280) OR (Y<0 OR Y>89
6) THEN GOTO 90
1060 PROCslow
1070 GOTO 1020
1080 *FX15
1090 A=GET:CLS:SC=INT SC
1100 IF SC>H(4) THEN H=4
1110 IF SC>H(3) THEN H=3
1120 IF SC>H(2) THEN H=2
1130 IF SC>H(1) THEN H=1
1140 IF SC=H(4) THEN GOTO 90
1150 FORN=4TOH STEP-1:H(N)=H(N-1):H$(N)
=H$(N-1):NEXT:H(H)=SC
1160 FORN=0TO255STEP32:SOUND1,-15,N/2,2
:SOUND1,-15,128+N/2,1:NEXT
1170 PRINTAB(13,5)"* C O N C R A T U L
A T I O N S *":TAB(9,15)"YOU HAVE SCORED
1":ISCTAB(10,20)"WHAT IS YOUR NAME?"
1180 *FX15,1
1190 VDU 23,1,1:0:0:0:INPUTTAB(10,25)"
">N$:VDU 23,1,0:0:0:0
1200 IF LEN N$=15 THEN VDU7:PRINT"YOU
HAVE ONLY SPACE FOR FIFTEEN LETTERS"
PLEASE ENTER AGAIN.....PRESS A KEY."A=
GET:CLS:GOTO 1160

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1210 SOUND1,-11,255,1:H$(H)=N$:GOTO 90
1220 DEFPROCslow:Z=TIME:REPEATUNTIL TIME
=Z+9:ENDPROC
1230 DATA624,5
1240 DATA"PORDE"STUVCUUVST"
1250 DATA"BBUUSTBBBBZCDEF"
1260 DATA"BBEFCDBBBEFAA"
1270 DATA"BBUVA NOGH1"AXTU"
1280 DATA"CDEF"JIRJICIADE"
1290 DATA"ZA MJJR"AJCIVAA"
1300 DATA"FKTPQRSTYZJKLYZ"
1310 DATA"TBGGHICDEFACDBBU"
1320 DATA"BEFJCIVAA"AXWBE"
1330 DATA"HI"AJKL YVWBEFS"
1340 DATA"IXWBEFCDBBUVC"
1350 DATA"JKLBBBUVAACDBBY"
1360 DATA"ACDEFCDDBHAA"NOE"
1370 DATA"YWYV"AAJKLYWPFQ"
1380 DATA"BBEFSWZCDBBEFST"
1390 DATA"DBUTBBFXBBBUVC"
1400 DATA"XWBEF"MNBBGHA"
1410 DATA"BBEF"MJJRCPJALY"
1420 DATA"EF"MJJR"ANOE"
1430 DATA"STQR"AMJR"
1440 DATA"UV"CGHI"JIRST"
1450 DATA"BBUZAJKLUTFOR CD"
1460 DATA"BBEFAACDBBBBUVA"
1470 DATA"EFSTZAACDBBBYZ"
1480 DATA"STBBBBZACDBBBE"
1490 DATA"BBEFCDBBYZXWBEF"
1500 DATA"BBUUXWBEFCDBBUV"
1510 DATA"BBEFCDBBUVXWBEF"
1520 DATA"GH1"XWBBBEBBUV"
1530 DATA"ICICDEFZCDEF"
1540 DATA"ICICVAA"AASTYZST"
1550 DATA"ICICVAA"XWBBBEBB"
1560 DATA448,2
1570 DATA"BBGHICDBBBBEFVAA"
1580 DATA"GHICVAA"NOEF"MJICV"
1590 DATA"ICICKLPR"MJICV"
1600 DATA"ICICLREF"MJICV"
1610 DATA"KLBBBUVSTFGJICV"
1620 DATA"CDEFCDDBBBEDPQKL"
1630 DATA"AA"ANOGHIADE"
1640 DATA"AA"JICICVAA"
1650 DATA"YZSTPQJICIKLYZST"
1660 DATA"EFCDDBBYZBBEFC"
1670 DATA"UVXWBBHOBBUVXW"
1680 DATA"BBBEEFJIRCDDBBB"
1690 DATA"BBBUVAJR"XWBBB"
1700 DATA"EFCDDBYZSTBBEFC"
1710 DATA"MACDBBBBEF"VAA"
1720 DATA"MIJLBBBBBUVMJICV"
1730 DATA"PKLBBGHNOBEPQKL"
1740 DATA"EFCDGHICJINDEFCD"
1750 DATA"UVAJJCJIR"XW"
1760 DATA"EFVAAJKLPQR"MICD"

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Programming: BBC

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1770 DATA"MI\NOSHIMI\A"
1780 DATA"TPQMLPQRJLPLQKLY"
1790 DATA"BBBDEF"ACDBBBB"
1800 DATA"BBDEF"STYZACDBB"
1810 DATA"DBBLV"CEFAKWBEE"
1820 DATA"MNDEF"XWUACDGH"
1830 DATA"FOR"MNDSHAAJL"
1840 DATA"GHISTPQRJLYZ"NO"
1850 DATA"JKLBBBBLVBBBFPQR"
1860 DATA"ZCDEBBBDEFBS"
1870 DATA"BYZSMBBBBLVSTB"
1880 DATA"BBBBLVBBBBLVBBB"
1890 DATA22,I
1900 DATA"STUVSTUVCEFXWYZ"
1910 DATA"CDDBBBBBLVSTBBEF"
1920 DATA"XWBBEFCDDBBBB"SB"
1930 DATA"CDGHI"XZCDEF"STB"
1940 DATA"YZJCECFAXTUVCDB"
1950 DATA"EFJALJLY"NOBBUVC"
1960 DATA"STYZCDBBBLVCDDB"
1970 DATA"CEFA"NOEF"ANOE"
1980 DATA"XWUV"JIR"JIR"
1990 DATA"BBBFPQR"STPQR"S"

2000 DATA"BBDEF"SVCDDBBLV"
2010 DATA"GHIXTUVCFXZCDBB"
2020 DATA"JKLBBB"CFANOE"
2030 DATA"ACDEFJKLUZSHFQR"
2040 DATA"YWYV"ACDBBBBFSV"
2050 DATA"EDBBBLVXWBBBLVCF"
2060 DATA"ACDEFCDDBBBEFA"
2070 DATA"SMY"ANOSHIXT"
2080 DATA"BBBLV"JIRJCECD"
2090 DATA"BBBBLVCF"JICIA"
2100 DATA"JIRJIRJIRJIRJIR"
2110 DATA"JIRJIRJIRJIRJIR"
2120 DATA"XWQR"AAJLBBEF"
2130 DATA"CDDBBLVAAACDGH"
2140 DATA"YZCDBBBLVAAJLUV"
2150 DATA"EFXWBBEFAAXWBBEF"
2160 DATA"STBBEF"XWBBEFST"
2170 DATA"BBBLV"CDDBBLVCD"
2180 DATA"EFCDDBBLVXWBBBLVYZ"
2190 DATA"STYZCDBBBBDEFCD"
2200 DATA"BBEFXWBBBLVAAST"
2210 DATA"EFSTBBBBLVYZCD"
2220 DATA 0,0

1230 DATA448,5
1240 DATA"STUV"CDSHNGHNOB"
1250 DATA"CDGHI"AAJCEJCE"
1260 DATA"AAJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1270 DATA"AAAJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1280 DATA"MYZAJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1290 DATA"DEFAAJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1300 DATA"AAAJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1310 DATA"AAJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1320 DATA"AMNDGHIACDBBFPQR"
1330 DATA"WPQRJLYZ"NOEFST"
1340 DATA"DGHIACDBBFPQR"MN"
1350 DATA"AJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1360 DATA"YZJLYWYZ"MIJCE"
1370 DATA"GHJCDDBBBLVTPQJCE"
1380 DATA"CEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1390 DATA"CEJLYZ"AACF"NOF"
1400 DATA"KLBBEF"AAAMJCEJCE"
1410 DATA"EDDEF"STYZXTPTQJCE"
1420 DATA"XTUVCDEFCDDBBFPQR"
1430 DATA"TBGGH"AAJCEJCEJCE"
1440 DATA"BGHCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1450 DATA"HECEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1460 DATA"CEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1470 DATA"KLEF"AAJCEJCEJCE"
1480 DATA"LBHISTYVA"SVAN"
1490 DATA"FKLBBBBLVCF"JIR"
1500 DATA"ACDEFCDGHIJIR"
1510 DATA"UZAA"AAJLPLQR"
1520 DATA"EEAASYZ"NOEF"CE"
1530 DATA"ANNOBBFPQR"STY"
1540 DATA"JIRJIRJIRJIRJIR"
1550 DATA"MIJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1560 DATA472,2
1570 DATA"STUVSTUV"CDDBB"
1580 DATA"CDDBBBBHI"AAACDB"
1590 DATA"XWBBEFCEJCEJCEJCE"
1600 DATA"CDGHI"AJKLYZAAA"
1610 DATA"UZAJKLZACDBBBLVYZ"
1620 DATA"EEAACDBBBLVACDBB"
1630 DATA"SWYZ"NOEFAXWBBE"
1640 DATA"MNBBFPQR"NOEF"
1650 DATA"PGRCDEF"MIJIR"MI"
1660 DATA"GHIAA"MIJIR"MI"
1670 DATA"JCEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1680 DATA"AJCEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1690 DATA"AAJCEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1700 DATA"YZAJKLBBBLVCEDEF"
1710 DATA"BBYZCDEFCDDBBBLV"
1720 DATA"CEFAA"XWBBBLV"

1730 DATA"AAJCEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1740 DATA"YZ"CDDBBBLVNOEF"SB"
1750 DATA"EF"XZCDBBFPQR"STB"
1760 DATA"CFACACDBBLVCDDB"
1770 DATA"STYVAACDBBBLVAC"
1780 DATA"TBBBBLVZCFAAJCEJCE"
1790 DATA"BBBBLVBYVAJAJKLY"
1800 DATA"DGHIACDGHAA"NOE"
1810 DATA"AJCEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1820 DATA"AAJCEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1830 DATA"AAJCEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1840 DATA"VACDBBBLVJAJKLUV"
1850 DATA"KLYZACDGHAAACDEF"
1860 DATA"BBBBLVZAJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1870 DATA"BBBBLVZAJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1880 DATA"BBEF"MIJCEJCEJCEJCE"
1890 DATA592,1
1900 DATA"AA"STUVA"AA"
1910 DATA"YZ"STBBEFA"AA"
1920 DATA"EFMNDEF"AA"AA"
1930 DATA"MIJRSTUVASTUVA"
1940 DATA"MIJR"CEDEF"NOBBYV"
1950 DATA"FOR"AASTPQRCDDB"
1960 DATA"GH"XWBBEFA"NO"
1970 DATA"JKLUVCDBBLVWFPQR"
1980 DATA"NOEFA"NOEFCDBBLV"
1990 DATA"FOR"JIR"ANDB"
2000 DATA"BBBLVMIJR"JIR"
2010 DATA"CDDBFPQR"MIJR"AA"
2020 DATA"YZCDEF"STPQRSTY"
2030 DATA"EFXWUVSTBBEF"CE"
2040 DATA"STBBBBLVSTUZA"
2050 DATA"BBBBLVBBBLVCEFA"
2060 DATA"BBBBLVBBBBLVAA"
2070 DATA"BBEFCDGHI"AA"XT"
2080 DATA"BBBLVAAJLJLUA"CD"
2090 DATA"BBEFAXWBBBLVYV"AA"
2100 DATA"EF"SWBBEFCDDBBLVZ"
2110 DATA"STBBBLVXWBBEFA"
2120 DATA"TBDEFCDDBBBLV"AA"
2130 DATA"DBBLVXWBBEFA"AA"
2140 DATA"ZCDBBBLV"AA"
2150 DATA"FXWBBEFA"STUV"X"
2160 DATA"CDDBBLVSTBBBLVZ"
2170 DATA"UZACDBBBLVCEFA"
2180 DATA"BBYZACDEF"XWBBE"
2190 DATA"BBBLVAA"STBBEFA"
2200 DATA"GHCEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
2210 DATA"CEJCEJCEJCEJCEJCE"
2220 DATA 0,0

```


Programming: Bytes & Pieces

Circle Graphics on MSX

by Charles Bajada

I still cannot understand the lack of articles on MSX, considering the fact that many are now realising that this is a system with great potential. I hope this program will encourage MSX users to write routines of their own.

The routine opposite is a graphic demonstration called 'Circle Graphics'. This makes use of the excellent circle command, showing some of the great potential of the MSX. A series of circle are drawn in various configurations around the screen, producing some pleasing patterns.

The program can be easily altered by the user to create endless variations.

```
10 COLOR ,1,1
20 FOR C=2 TO 22:COLOR C
30 SCREEN 2
40 CLS:FOR I=1 TO 100:CIRCLE(121,95),1,1,1/20,1/7
50 NEXT I
60 FOR X=1 TO 500:NEXT:BEEP
65 CLS:FOR I=0 TO 150:CIRCLE(121,95),1/2,1,1,5,0:
NEXT I
70 FOR X=0 TO 500:NEXT:BEEP
80 CLS:FOR I=0 TO 315:STEP 1:CIRCLE(121,251),40,1
20,0:FOR I=300 TO 315:STEP 1:BEEP
90 FOR X=0 TO 500:NEXT:BEEP
100 CLS:FOR I=0 TO 200:CIRCLE(181,0),15,1,1,1/10,1/10
100,1,0,2,0:FOR I=201 TO 210:NEXT I
110 FOR X=0 TO 500:NEXT:BEEP
120 CLS:FOR I=0 TO 315:CIRCLE(121,143),1,1,1/10,1/10
180,2,0:NEXT I
130 FOR X=0 TO 500:NEXT:BEEP
140 CLS:FOR I=0 TO 200:CIRCLE(180,140),1,1,1/10,1/10
140,1,0,1,0,1,0:NEXT I
150 FOR X=0 TO 500:NEXT:BEEP
160 CLS:FOR I=0 TO 99:STEP 1:CIRCLE(121,1),1,TAN(I/70)
180,1,0,1,0,1,0:NEXT I
170 FOR X=0 TO 500:NEXT:BEEP
180 CLS:FOR I=0 TO 90:CIRCLE(121,90),1,1,1/10,1/10
50:NEXT I
190 FOR X=0 TO 500:NEXT:BEEP
200 CLS:FOR I=0 TO 10:STEP 1:FOR I TO 10:STEP 1:CIRCLE
(120,150),10,1,0,1,0,1,0:NEXT I
210 FOR X=0 TO 500:NEXT:BEEP
220 NEXT C
230 GOTO 20
```

Checkboard on Spectrum

by R G Luxton

Checkboard will instantly fill the screen with a checkboard pattern in *Bright* and *non-Bright*. A call to the same *USR* will then clear it from the screen just as quickly.

Type in and *Run* the program. Enter as a direct command a short print command - say, *Print At 10,12,"Popular"* - followed by *Enter*. Now enter *Goto g*, followed by *Enter*, and you should see Checkboard work. Again, *Goto g*, and the checkboard pattern will clear, leaving your message on the screen.

Checkboard can be used as a guide to layout on the screen, used directly or incorporated into a *Plot* and *Draw* program; a demonstration routine from Line 2000 shows another use. Enter *Goto 2000* and press any key during each pause.

Also, after *Breaking* the program, *Poke 65315* with any number from 1 to 255, followed by *Goto g*. Leaving characters on the screen as you do so creates an interesting effect.

To use this in your own programs, delete Lines 120, 130 and from 2000 to 2050. Enter merge the program into your own or *Run* it and *Save* with *Code 65304,64*. You should add *Clear 65303* when reloading it, and enter *Randomize USR 65304* to call or clear the checkboard effect. The program is relocatable.

```
100 CLEAR 65303
110 FOR I=65304 TO 65367: READ a: POKE
i,a: NEXT i
120 LET g=130: STOP
130 RANDOMIZE USR 65304
1000 DATA 33,0,88,1,96,1,30,32,22,16,62,
64,174,119,35,35,21,40,10,29
1010 DATA 40,12,11,120,177,32,239,43,201
,35,22,16,24,241,43,43,30,32,24,238,43,4
5
1020 DATA 101,51,88,39,237,16,13,0,9,0,1
33,28,16,28,82,27,118,27,3,19,0,62
1030 STOP
2000 BORDER 0
2010 FOR I=64 TO 120 STEP 1
2020 PAPER 7: CLS : POKE 65315,i
2030 PRINT AT 8,9;"P O P U L A R";AT 10,
7;"C O M P U T I N G";AT 12,9;"W E E K L
Y"
2040 RANDOMIZE USR 65304: PAUSE 0: IF IN
KEY$="s" THEN STOP
2050 PAPER 0: FOR c=1 TO 22: LET a=USR 3
280: NEXT c: NEXT i: GO TO 1010
```

Colour on Commodore 64

by John Eden

Colour allows you to change all the letters or numbers on the screen to any colour you specify, using the form *Sys 50050,0-15*.

Try entering this:

For J = 0 to 1 Step 0: For E = 0 to 15: Sys 50050,E:Next:Next

This will make all the letters on the screen flash continuously.

```
800 FOR I=50050 TO 50083: READ Z
802 POKE I,Z: C=C+Z: NEXT
805 IF C=6247 THEN PRINT "ERROR"
807 IF C=6247 THEN PRINT "CHECK"
808 IF C=6247 THEN LIST 820-
810 PRINT "PROGRAM OPERATING"
815 REM TYPE "SYS 50050, COLOUR"
820 DATA 32,155,183,165,101,162
830 DATA 0,134,252,162,216,134,253
840 DATA 145,252,230,252,166,252,208
850 DATA 2,230,253,224,232,208,242
860 DATA 166,253,224,219,208,236,96
```


Programming: Peek & Poke



Plain sailing

Mrs CP Sargent, of Falmouth in Cornwall, writes.

Q Is there any software available that would allow programs written for the Sinclair Spectrum to be run on the Sinclair QL?

The main reason for wanting to use the QL is the fact that the fast loading with microdrives is ideal for use on board my boat.

A As far as I know, there is no emulation software that allows a QL to become a Spectrum. As a technical possibility this is not too outrageous an idea since the 68000, the microprocessor in the QL, is capable of simulating the Z80, the microprocessor in the Spectrum. No doubt someone will write in saying that they have some software to do this, if so, I'll let you know.

An alternative that may sound silly is to get a Spectrum with Interface 1 and microdrives. They are still available and pretty cheaply too. However the Amstrad deal has thrown the question of Sinclair-specific peripherals into turmoil, and their future is by no means assured.

Graphic animation

Stan Cooper, of St. Fergus in Aberdeenshire writes.

Q I would appreciate your comments on the suitability of equipment which will be capable of satisfying the following needs:

- 1) Building colour graphics programs to illustrate the behaviour of fluids in pipelines and vessels.
- 2) Designing simulations of industrial processes with graph-

ics and numeric information capable of interaction with the trainee.

3) Displaying video pictures of equipment and superimposing animated graphics to illustrate the interior workings.

4) Saving the results of (3) on to video tape for use when the computer is not available.

5) Creating text and graphics for class handouts. At the moment, I feel that the imminent Commodore Amiga will be a suitable machine. The new Atari 1040ST may also be a possibility.

I have decided to limit myself to a spending ceiling of £2000 excluding video camera and would appreciate your advice.

A Your biggest problem will be programming and presuming that you can take care of this (not that easy), both the Atari ST and the Commodore Amiga should be able to cope with your needs. The graphics capabilities of both machines are excellent with the Amiga being a little better due to its graphics chips.

If you want to produce still graphics, in colour, both machines have graphics packages to allow you to do this. When you consider what happened to the standard of similar Macintosh packages, after MacPaint, there will be some major improvements over those now available. These should allow you to produce simple moving graphics with a minimum of programming using multiple frames displayed in succession.

As far as I know, both machines will allow video pictures to be displayed along with their graphics, although the Atari ST will need a little external gadgetry to link the horizontal and vertical syncs to those of the camera. It may well be that a company will produce this (you can check this with Atari UK on 0753 33444).

Saving pictures to video tape on the Atari ST is not so simple since the machine puts out an RGB signal. However, this can be converted into a composite signal - a mixture of red, green, blue, and sync on one channel as used on most video recorders - with a simple mixer circuit, again, someone ought to come up with one in these soon. The Amiga should cause no problems since it puts out both signals.

The creation of handouts

should be pretty simple on both machines, since all you would have to do would be to draw the handout with a graphics package and then dump it to the printer. However, this would be black and white, and getting colour may well not be worth while, since colour printers are generally more expensive than their b/w counterparts and need extra software. It may well be that Commodore, which produces a colour printer for the C64, has given this capability to the Amiga.

Your project is ambitious and you would be wise to scout around the IBM and BBC mags before you definitely set your mind on the ST or Amiga. Someone, somewhere may well have anticipated your needs and have a package all set up and raring to go. The Amiga or the ST are certainly capable of doing the job but they will both probably need some additional equipment and programming before you get any results.

Dragon printing

William Dunn of Warley, West Midlands, writes:

Q A short while ago I purchased from Microdeal a copy of its Telewriter which I will be using with my Dragon 32. This wordprocessor is of little use without a printer.

Could you please tell me if the Amstrad DMP 2000 is compatible with the Dragon (the DMP 2000 is my first choice as, if finances allow, I may purchase the Amstrad £126).

If this printer will not work with the Dragon, could you advise me on a Near Letter Quality printer priced under £175 that will work on both machines. The printer will be used mainly for letter writing and, as I am shortly to be made redundant, short story writing.

A Both the Amstrad £126 and the Dragon 32 have Centronics compatible printer interfaces. The only difference between them are the cables

used to connect them to the printers. However, both of these should be available from various dealers.

If you can't get hold of one, it should be easy enough to make one up. Your local Tandy dealer will carry all the bits and pieces. No soldering involved since the connectors are available in clip on form.

One thing to bear in mind about buying the DMP 2000 is that a printer is being sold in a package with the Amstrad £256 for £458. You may be better off (if finances permit) buying the whole system in one go. The DMP 2000 is £159 and the Amstrad £126 is £299 (green screen). This comes to, you guessed it, £458, the same as the £256. Pick your preferred keyboard of the two and see what discounts are available before you decide simply to buy a printer for your Dragon.

Microdrive availability

Mr R Bates, of Burton Joyce, Nottingham, writes:

Q How that the QL is available cheaply, is an attractive machine provided that the Microdrive cartridges remain in production. Can the cartridges from the ICL OnePer-Desk can be used in the QL? If so, where can they be obtained and how much do they cost?

Also, what is the order issue of the various versions of the Rom and how can the version be determined?

A There are a lot of Microdrive cartridges in circulation so supplies should not be a problem for the foreseeable future. In any event, ICL will secure continuing supplies for its own use and these are perfectly useable on the QL. Transform Ltd, at 24 West Oak, Beckenham, Kent BR3 2EZ is selling QL Microdrive cartridges at £1.99 each.

As to Rom versions, you want a JM or JS and you can determine which is in your machine by entering Print Ver\$

Is there anything about your computer you don't understand, and which everyone else seems to take for granted? Whatever your problem **Peek It to Kenn Garroch** and every week he will **Poke** back as many answers as he can. The address is **Peek & Poke, PCW, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2R 3LD**

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Control of the Galaxy

Julian Rosen gives ■ brief summary of the wide variety of facilities provided by Micronet 800, the database for home computer enthusiasts on Prestel

Micronet 800 is probably one of the best known of all bulletin board style databases; with around 20,000 subscribers, it is the largest single area on Prestel.

Although many of you will at least know of Micronet, if not subscribe to it, it is worth looking at what Micronet has to offer – it's not all chatlines and telesoftware.

Micronet 800, so called because it resides on page 800 of Prestel, first came into being in 1983. Initially, it was centred mainly around the BBC micro, but now it offers services and information useful and relevant to all computer users. However, those people owning BBC's, Commodores, Spectrums, Apples, and Amstrads will benefit especially, because Micronet offers special microbases for these machines.

These microbases offer a large range of services, including hints and tips for games, special offers on software and hardware, some telesoftware (programs you can download from Micronet, save to disc or tape, and use later), and news relevant to its readers.

Of course, these microbases are not all that the 'Net has to offer. On the communications side, Micronet offers an instant electronic mail service. So long as you know the numeric address of the person you wish to send a letter to (normally their telephone number, unless they have asked to be kept ex-directory), you can type a page of text and send it at the touch

are already in chatline. All you have to do to communicate ■ ■ type ■ your message, and ■ the magic button.

A few seconds later, that message will ■ displayed for all other chatline users to read.

There are quite a few different types of chatline. DaisyChat archives up ■ 100 messages, so you can read up on a conversation before joining it. Quickchat ■ an 'update-and-destroy' chatline. The incoming message wipes out the previous message, so conversation is purely real-time; you can't read through earlier conversations.

TurboChat ■ the newest addition. As with DaisyChat, up to 100 messages can be archived. Further messages can be sent for 2p, which ■ the same charge Micronet make for sending a DaisyChat frame. However, TurboChat allows several messages ■ appear on the screen at the same time, with the latest one highlighted. This obviously makes conversations much easier to follow, and you can talk to several people at once without becoming (too!) confused. At present, there is only one TurboChat, whereas there are seven different Quickchats devoted to different subjects such as music, adventuring, as well as computing ■ general.

However, Micronet says that ■ response ■ good enough, they will open more, including one for its Multi User Game (MUG), *StarNet*.

StarNet allows 500 people to participate in an attempt to conquer the galaxy, which consists of over 3000 stars. *StarNet* is computer moderated, and for each move, players mailbox the computer with their moves. The results of these moves, battle reports, and obituaries, are published the next day.

The *StarNet* Chatline (soon hopefully to be a TurboChatline), is where alliances with other starship captains are made, and also where devious plots at coups are planned. What makes *StarNet* fun is that players can co-operate with each other in attempting to kill off a particular starship captain, or succeed ■ capturing a star. There is true interaction, whether it be violent or peaceful, and this is what makes the game such fun to play.

The original *StarNet* was written by Mike Singleton, who also wrote the much acclaimed *Lords of Midnight*, but was found to be so difficult to administer that ■ was shelved until Lawrence Kirby came along and re-wrote it, which explains the considerable delays Micronet experienced ■ getting the game up and running.

The aim of the game is to establish yourself as emperor over the galaxy, and this position you must try to maintain as long as possible before you are finally overthrown. *StarNet*'s first emperor was Tim Ridge, alias Jemal to those who knew him ■ the game.

For his successful efforts, he was awarded £150 by Micronet. Please note that this was a one-off prize, and will not be repeated!

Micronet also has a celebrity chatline.



Micronet's Multi-User Game, *StarNet*

where famous, or infamous persons are on-line to answer your questions. These are held regularly at a specified time each week.

Mary Whitehouse was to have appeared recently, but she cancelled her appointment at the last minute by saying that she had something more important to do! Steve Gold, of Prestel hacking fame, was on the celeb-line recently.

The news section on the 'Net is very comprehensive and up to date, providing instant news about the computing industry. There is even a Sunday Extra area, Micronet's own Sunday 'supplement', with news and reviews, not all of ■ purely computing nature.

There is much more to Micronet than that which I have talked about, but this article is meant only as a rundown of the major services offered. I will conclude by telling you the costs involved. Subscription is £52 per annum, and no connect charges are incurred if you use the system after 6pm.

You will need a modem capable of 1200/75 baud, and suitable viewdata compatible software.

Micronet is definitely worth joining, and £52 pa is ■ small price to pay for the material available on the system. For further details, contact Micronet at Durant House, Herbal Hill, London EC1 (01-278 3143).



Micronet's Chatline

of a button.

There is ■ telex service that is very simple to use. Telexes within the UK cost only 57p per frame (one screenful of text). To Europe, a telex would cost over £1.00, and to the USA and Canada, £2.00.

One of my favourite areas on the 'Net, as it's usually called by subscribers, is the chatlines. When you enter the chatlines, you can talk to all the other 'Net users who

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Music and micros — getting started

In the first of a new regular series, Mark Jenkins looks at the potential for making music with your micro

Micro computers turn their hands quite readily to music — after all, music is only a mathematically-related series of sounds occurring in time. Of course, the best music has elements which can't be reduced to mere mathematics, so even if the computer is your chosen instrument some creativity is essential.

In the not-too-distant future it should be possible to choose a computer or synthesiser as an instrument on which to take music exams. Certainly the pop world has rushed to employ computer techniques, with the academic world lagging far behind (with the exception of one or two notable such as Dr Peter Zinovieff, the inventor of the British EMS range of synthesisers many years back).

Many of the computers used in the music industry aren't recognisable as such — they're packaged as musical instruments so that musicians can use them. But over the last couple of years it's become obvious to instrument designers that they can save a lot of effort by using a domestic micro such as the Commodore 64, Atari, Apple, IBM PC or Macintosh (well, these are all domestic micros in the States!) to perform basic functions such as memory storage and data manipulation.

The computer music explosion began a couple of years ago when the Midi standard was introduced for processor-controlled instruments. Sending musical messages in a manner not a million miles away from the RS232 or other computer standards, Midi can be handled by a small micro with a suitable interface — so now Midi keyboards, drum machines, sequencers, sound samplers, computers and even guitars can be interconnected to give powerful compositional facilities.

So how can the amateur musician with a micro compete with the professional with access to a million-pound studio? You can certainly record the sounds of a C64 or BBC B (arranged with an inexpensive software package), but a hardware keyboard add-on will help you play more fluently. Improved voice modules such as Commodore's Sound Expander will give you more professional sounds similar to those from the £1000 Yamaha DX7. And sound samplers such as those from Datal,

Commodore and 2-bit Systems will allow you to go some way towards reproducing the effects of the Mirage and Prophet keyboards (costing £1,500 and £2,000 respectively) and even of the Fairlight computer musical instrument (a snip at £55,000).

If you want to spend a little money on Midi-based synthesisers, the excellent Casio CZ-101 is the best bet at only £245

Over and above that, there are fine keyboards available from Roland (the analog Alpha Juno 1 at £550), from Yamaha (the digital synthesiser DX100 at £349) and many others.

Ironically, the micro musician can now use exactly the same equipment as a top professional for very little outlay. If you already have a BBC, a few hundred pounds will buy you the UMI-2B, a hardware/software Midi sequencer package used by Blancmange, A-Ha, Erasure and many others. Tangerine Dream use Commodore-based packages from C-Lab and Steinberg, while Jan Hammer makes up those dirty drum machine sounds for *Miami Vice* on an Apple-based Eprom programmer. In the States, the Hybrid Arts packages for the Atari 130XE are tremendously popular, and although we have yet to hear of a Spectrum or an Electron in the charts, their time will surely come (there's already a powerful Midi interface and software package for the Amstrad).

The attractive aspect of micro-based music making is that you can start (very) cheaply and build up as your interest

increases. The software packages will help you play along the way (giving easily understood graphics displays, rounding off your timing, helping you create new sounds and so on) and before long you can be in a position to create highly professional sounds. At that stage, your own creativity and imagination have to take over...

In this column we'll be looking at every



Heaven 17

available music package coming on to the market, whether it's for a micro's on-board sound chip, for use with hardware add-ons, or for control of cheap Midi synthesisers via a suitable interface. If you have any cassettes of your own music we'll gladly have a listen, and we'll be happy to answer any questions on micro-based music. Stick with this column and in a couple of years you may be the new Heaven 17.

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For the QL, Spectrum (all), BBC & Electron:
WD Morse Tutor £4 cassette, £8 mdv or 5 1/4", £8 3 1/2"

Teach yourself to read Morse Code. From absolute beginning to 18 words/minute. Feedback on screen or printer. Random letters, numbers or mixed. 100 random sentences, many helpful features include phonetic speech via Currah Micro-Speech (Spectrum). Discs unsuitable for BBC B+

For the Sinclair Spectrum (48/128k):

Wordfinder 2 £8 cassette

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New Releases

John Cook looks through this week's new arrivals

AMSTRAD

Program Office Mate Type Utility Micro Amstrad Price £15.00
Supplier Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Office Master Type Utility Micro Amstrad Price £25.00 (tape or disc) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

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Program Spiky Harold Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Program Graham Gooch's Test Cricket Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £9.95 (tape) £14.95 (disc) **Supplier** Audio-genic, 12 Chiltern Enterprise Centre, Station Road, Theale, Berkshire RG7 4AA.

Program Classic Invaders Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £2.95 (tape) £9.95 (disc) **Supplier** Bubble Bus Software, 87 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1RX.

Golly - *Classic Invaders*? It can't be! No? All the memories of a mispent youth come flooding back. Leaning up against the wooden cabinet of an Invaders



machine in some dark corner of an under-age pub, trying to make half a pint of weak lager shandy last all night, feeding

the machine with 10p's.

And now, Bubble Bus would have it. These glory days can be recreated with *Classic Invaders*, Amstrad style, released under its 'Mini-Bus' range. Or can they?

Loading the game shows the same basic scenario as ever - you control a laser base at the bottom of the screen, whose destiny is to move left and right, then zap the hordes of aliens that are slowly descending from the top of the screen, to invade the Earth. They are also constantly dropping bombs which you must skilfully avoid, only aided by the cover your three bunkers can give you, until they too, are blown ■ bits.

Kill them all... then there's another screenful, then another, then another...

Now don't take me wrong. *Classic Invaders* is OK. The Invaders are now brightly coloured - quite smart in fact - and the game plays well enough. But to my mind, they're not green enough, not loud enough, and you don't lose money every time you make a mistake.

But if you've had your head in a bucket for seven years, just bought a computer and want to know what started it all; this is it.

Program Voodoo Rage Type Arcade Type Amstrad Price £1.99 **Supplier** Antarctic, Arctic Computing, Main St, Brondesburton, Yorkshire YO25 8RL.

Program Kane Type Adventure Micro Amstrad Price £2.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Program Rad Zone Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £1.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Program Turbo Esprit Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £8.95 **Supplier** Durell, Castle Lodge, Castle Green, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4AB.

ATARI

Program King's Quest Type Adventure Micro Atari ST Price £29.95 **Supplier** Mirrorsoft, Purnell Book Centre, Paulton, Bristol BS18 5LQ.

Pick of the week

Program Molecule Man Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Mastertronic is just about to enter the big time. Three titles in the CES Hall of Fame this season indicates that the American side of things is just about to take off, and there are some cracking titles in the pipeline for release soon.

Flesh Gordon is one to look out for in August - *Ninja* is promised to be the martial arts game to beat all martial arts games. And next month (you read it first here folks!) an Amstrad version of the arcade hit '86 *Gauntlet*... to be named *Storm*. These are the guys that all the other budget software houses have to beat... and you can see why with something like *Molecule Man*.

This one has you controlling something that looks a bit like the bubble in all the Corona adverts, around 256 *Knigh Lore* type screens. The single colour display and varied graphics are both done in a workman-like fashion.

The scam is that you are stuck in this maze/planet/

Molecule Man

whatever, deadly radiation all about you, and must collect 16 electric circuits in order to enable you to teleport off.

To aid you, you need pills (which ward off the effects of the rays, for a time) and bombs (no explanation needed - what would you do with a bomb?), both of which can be obtained from dispensers dotted around the place - if you have a coin... which in turn are found, etc, etc.

This makes it an acceptable enough race-against-time arcade adventure - and at £1.99 would have more than enough to recommend it to lovers of this genre.

The surprise comes on side B of the tape - a maze designer/editor that allows you to alter the existing maze or create your own, edit each and every screen to make it harder... or maybe easier (ha, ha)... you name it, you can alter it, save it to tape and then play your own version of the game. Or challenge a friend to play your version. Or invert a completely new game around the existing character and objects. This must increase the playing life of a game at least five-fold.

Program The Black Cauldron Type Adventure Micro Atari ST Price £29.95 **Supplier** Mirrorsoft, Purnell Book Centre, Paulton, Bristol BS18 5LQ.

BBC

Program Office Mate Type Utility Micro BBC B Price £12.00 (tape or disc) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Office Master Type Utility Micro BBC B Price £25.00 (tape or disc) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8.

Program BBC Money Management Type Utility Micro BBC B Price £12.95 (disc only) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8.

Program Woks! Type Arcade Micro BBC/Electron Price £1.99 **Supplier** Arctic Comput-

ing, Main St, Brondesburton, Yorkshire.

How's this for a plot? The Emperor has confiscated everyone's woks - because he thinks they are eating too much fatty food - and placed them in strongrooms with lots of ladders and guards.



You as the people's champion must rescue them. Does this win the prize for the thinnest and silliest disguise for a collect and dodge game or what?

Still, the graphics are chunky BBC, but colourful, and the gameplay is diverting enough for a short while ('Collect and dodge' with a touch of *Amdar*, I should have said).

Unpretentious, undemanding and cheap. You could do worse.

Program BBC Life and Business Organiser Type Utility Micro BBC B Price £19.95 (disc or Rom) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Statutory Sick Pay Package Type Utility Micro BBC B Price £39.95 **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 4RS.

Program The Great Wall Type Arcade Micro BBC B Price £1.99 **Supplier** Antarctic, Arctic Computing, Main St, Brandesburton, Yorkshire YO25 8RL.

C16/Plus 4

Program Runner Type Arcade Micro C16/Plus4 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Program Shark Type Arcade Micro C16/Plus4 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Program Baby Berks Type Arcade Micro C16/Plus4 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Alpha Omega, CRL Group, 9 Kings Yard, Carpenters Rd, London E15.

Program The Exploits of Fingers Malone Type Arcade Micro C16/Plus4 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Program Street Olympics Type Arcade Micro C16/Plus4 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

COMMODORE 64

Program Nexus Type Arcade Adventure Micro Commodore 64 Price £9.95 (tape) £12.95 (disc) **Supplier** Nexus Productions, OSB House, 30 High St,

Beckenham, Kent BR3 1AY.

Program Return of the Space Warrior Type Arcade Micro Commodore 64 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Alpha Omega, CRL House, 9 Kings Yard, Carpenters Rd, London E15.

I must be the time of the year, but there's a lot of so-called 'budget' titles around right now. My theory is that this is supposed to lure school kids back to their computer during the summer - when they should, naturally, be out annoying the neighbours. Still, this is an offering from CRL's budget label, Alpha Omega, called *Return of the Space Warrior*. 'It had to be a nightmare,' says the cassette inlay, and true enough, it is - namely a fairly lame version of *Joust*.

Joust, you might remember, was a highly original game in its time. Played on a screen



with downwards gravity (and strategically place platforms for you to rest on) you played a knight aboard a griffon-like beast, armed with a lance. You pressed 'fire' to flap your beast's wings (and therefore gain height) which was of great importance in the game, as if you collided with an enemy, you would die if your lance was lower than his.

Back at *Space Warrior*, gone are the Gryphons (in come ovalspheres - blobs to you) and the lances and the excellent two player option in which you could play simultaneously on screen with a friend. What you are left with is a game which admittedly can get quite fast - but is totally lacking in visual appeal and atmosphere. Mediocre budget fare I'm afraid.

Program Bump Set Spike Type Arcade Micro Commodore 64

Price £1.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

SPECTRUM

Program Spike Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird Software, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Program Helicopter Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Program Wild Bunch Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Program The Boggit Type Adventure Micro Spectrum Price £7.95 **Supplier** CRL Group, 11 Kings Yard, Carpenters Rd, London E15.

Program Dragon of Notacare Type Adventure Micro Spectrum Price £2.50 **Supplier** David Edgar, 1 High Parksall, Erskine, Scotland PA5 7HY.

Program The Master Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Antarctic, Arctic Computing, Main St, Brandesburton, Yorkshire YO25 8RL.

Program Office Master Type Utility Micro Spectrum Price £15.00 (tape) £17.50 (microdrive) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Conquest Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £2.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Program Ninja Master Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Now you'd expect a program entitled *Ninja Warrior* to be all gore, broken bones and white pyjamas tops, wouldn't you?

Well, no... you'd be wrong - for a start we all know that the sneaky Ninja, 'a breed of warriors feared by all...' only ever wear black, so as to sneak up on unsuspecting passers-by and generally do the dirty on them in the depths of the night. And also, in this martial arts

epic, the only blood ever spilt is your own.

It is the annual Ninja games - and this is your big chance to impress the elders. Up, Bruce Lee finally meets Daley



Thompson. There are four tests in all. The 'punch the approaching arrows' test. The 'chopping the log in half' test (this is a hammer on two keys job) The 'deflect the stars' test (high, middle or low). Finally a 'zap the cans with the blowpipe' test. Like all the other sports simulations, you are given three chances to attain a qualifying score to pass on to the next test.

The graphics (mostly black on yellow) are not really that good, the gameplay isn't that good and the sound consists of two sampled screams which you will soon get tired of.

Put it this way; despite all the chopping and parrying, this is not another *Thrust*.

Program Pentagram Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £9.95 **Supplier** US Gold, Unit 10, The Parkway Industrial Centre, Heneage St, Birmingham B7.

QL

Program Life and Business Organiser Type Utility Micro QL Price £19.95 **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Executive Adventure Type Adventure Micro QL Price £12.95 **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Dragonhold Type Arcade Micro QL Price £19.95 **Supplier** Rubicon Computer System, 11 Bannernale Rd, Sheffield, S7 2DJ.

Top Twenty

- | | | | |
|----|-----|---|-----------------|
| 1 | (-) | World Cup Carnival (Spectrum, Amstrad, C16) | Gold |
| 2 | (3) | Kik Start (Spectrum, C64, C16, Atari) | Mastertronic |
| 3 | (5) | Batman (Spectrum, Amstrad) | Firebird |
| 4 | (2) | Formula One Simulator (Various) | Mastertronic |
| 5 | (1) | Thrust (C64) | Firebird |
| 6 | (7) | International Karate (Spectrum, C64) | System 3 |
| 7 | (-) | Cauldron 2 (C64) | Palace |
| 8 | (4) | Commando (Various) | Elite |
| 9 | (6) | Spindizzy (Spectrum, C64, Amstrad) | Electric Dreams |
| 10 | (8) | Rock 'N' Wrestle (Sp, C64, Am) | Melbourne House |



Biggles flies in at 16

- | | | | |
|----|------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 11 | (15) | Saboteur (Spectrum, C64, Amstrad) | Durell |
| 12 | (9) | Bomb Jack (Spectrum, C64, Amstrad) | Elite |
| 13 | (-) | Knight Tyme (Spectrum) | Mastertronic |
| 14 | (16) | Last V8 (C64, Amstrad, Atari) | Mastertronic |
| 15 | (14) | Vegas Jackpot (Various) | Mastertronic |
| 16 | (-) | Biggles (C64) | Mirrorsoft |
| 17 | (-) | One Man And His Droid (Various) | Mastertronic |
| 18 | (-) | Ninja Master (Spectrum) | Firebird |
| 19 | (-) | Green Beret (Spectrum, C64) | Imagine |
| 20 | (-) | Heavy On The Magik (Spectrum) | Gargoyle Games |



Straight In is number one

NEXT WEEK

● CES report

The Summer Consumer Electronic Show in Chicago is the world's biggest exhibi-



Top Tens

Amstrad

- | | | |
|----|------|------------------------------|
| 1 | (-) | Batman (Deman) |
| 2 | (2) | Wetter Games (Eps/US Gold) |
| 3 | (3) | Commando (Elite) |
| 4 | (1) | Get Dealer (FBS) |
| 5 | (-) | World Cup Carnival (US Gold) |
| 6 | (-) | Sounder (Gremlin) |
| 7 | (4) | Bite (Firebird) |
| 8 | (4) | Last V8 (Mastertronic) |
| 9 | (-) | One Simulator (Mastertronic) |
| 10 | (10) | Into Oblivion (Mastertronic) |



Thrust - knocked off the top

All figures compiled by Gallup/Microscope

Commodore

- | | | |
|----|------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | (-) | World Cup Carnival (US Gold) |
| 2 | (3) | Thrust (Firebird) |
| 3 | (-) | Karate (System 3) |
| 4 | (-) | Cauldron 2 (Palace) |
| 5 | (6) | Biggles (Mirrorsoft) |
| 6 | (-) | Saboteur (Durell) |
| 7 | (3) | Spindizzy (Electric Dreams) |
| 8 | (-) | Bump Set Spike (Mastertronic) |
| 9 | (7) | One Simulator (Mastertronic) |
| 10 | (10) | Golf (Ariolasoft) |

Atari

- | | | |
|----|------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | (-) | Kik Start (Mastertronic) |
| 2 | (1) | Vegas Jackpot (Mastertronic) |
| 3 | (1) | Last V8 (Mastertronic) |
| 4 | (8) | One Man & his Droid (Mirrorsoft) |
| 5 | (4) | New York City (American) |
| 6 | (9) | Scorpio (American) |
| 7 | (7) | Shamus (American) |
| 8 | (8) | Fighter Pilot (Digital Int) |
| 9 | (2) | Action Biker (Mastertronic) |
| 10 | (10) | Archie Classics (Datasoft) |

BBC

- | | | |
|----|------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | (1) | Commando (Elite) |
| 2 | (-) | Brute Lee (US Gold) |
| 3 | (3) | Tennis (Gargoyle) |
| 4 | (-) | Jack Attack (Gargoyle) |
| 5 | (-) | Jail Set Willy (Ware Projects) |
| 6 | (-) | Winter Olympics (Tynesoft) |
| 7 | (-) | Comp. His ID (Beau Jolly) |
| 8 | (-) | Galactic Patrol (Mastertronic) |
| 9 | (10) | Combat Lynx (Durell) |
| 10 | (-) | Death Star (Superior) |

Spectrum

- | | | |
|----|-----|-------------------------------|
| 1 | (-) | World Cup Carnival (US Gold) |
| 2 | (1) | Batman (Deman) |
| 3 | (-) | Knight Tyme (Mastertronic) |
| 4 | (3) | Rock 'N' Wrestle (Mel House) |
| 5 | (4) | Green Beret (Imagine) |
| 6 | (-) | Ninja Master (Firebird) |
| 7 | (7) | Heavy On The Magik (Gargoyle) |
| 8 | (-) | Bomb Jack (Elite) |
| 9 | (6) | Fremian (Mastertronic) |
| 10 | (-) | Quazatron (Hewson) |

● Language series

Next week we focus on Pascal, the highly structured language which is rapidly becoming an industry standard.

● Soundcheck

Don't miss the next in Mark Jenkins' new regular music column.

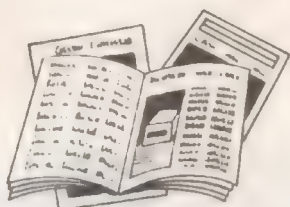
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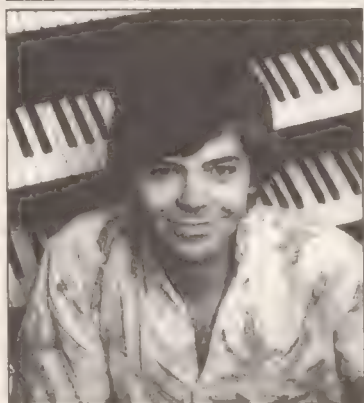
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Music and micros – getting started

In the first of a new regular series, Mark Jenkins looks at the potential for making music with your micro

Micro computers turn their hands quite readily to music – after all, music is only a mathematically-related series of sounds occurring in time. Of course, the best music has elements which can't be reduced to mere mathematics, so even if the computer is your chosen instrument some creativity is essential.

In the not-too-distant future it should be possible to choose a computer or synthesiser as an instrument on which to take music exams. Certainly the pop world has rushed to employ computer techniques, with the academic world lagging far behind (with the exception of one or two notables such as Dr Peter Zinovieff, the inventor of the British EMS range of synthesisers many years back).

Many of the computers used in the music industry aren't recognisable as such – they're packaged as musical instruments so that musicians can use them. But over the last couple of years it's become obvious to instrument designers that they can save a lot of effort by using a domestic micro such as the Commodore 64, Atari, Apple, IBM PC or Macintosh (well, these are all domestic micros in the States!) to perform basic functions such as memory storage and data manipulation.

The computer music explosion began a couple of years ago when the Midi standard was introduced for processor-controlled instruments. Sending musical messages in a manner not a million miles away from the RS232 or other computer standards, Midi can be handled by a small micro with a suitable interface – so now Midi keyboards, drum machines, sequencers, sound samplers, computers and even guitars can be interconnected to give powerful compositional facilities.

So how can the amateur musician with a micro compete with the professional with access to a million-pound studio? You can certainly record the sounds of a C64 or BBC B (arranged with an inexpensive software package), but a hardware keyboard add-on will help you play more fluently. Improved voice modules such as Commodore's Sound Expander will give you more professional sounds similar to those from the £1000 Yamaha DX7. And sound samplers such as those from Datael,

Commodore and 2-bit Systems will allow you to go some way towards reproducing the effects of the Mirage and Prophet keyboards (costing £1,500 and £2,000 respectively) and even of the Fairlight computer musical instrument (a snip at £55,000).

If you want to spend a little money on Midi-based synthesisers, the excellent Casio CZ-101 is the best bet at only £245.

Over and above that, there are fine keyboards available from Roland (the analog Alpha Juno 1 at £550), from Yamaha (the digital synthesiser DX100 at £349) and many others.

Ironically, the micro musician can now use exactly the same equipment as a top professional for very little outlay. If you already have a BBC B, a few hundred pounds will buy you the UMI-2B, a hardware/software Midi sequencer package used by Blancmange, A-Ha, Erasure and many others. Tangerine Dream use Commodore-based packages from C-Lab and Steinberg, while Jan Hammer makes up those dirty drum machine sounds for *Miami Vice* on an Apple-based Eprom programmer. In the States, the Hybrid Arts packages for the Atari 130XE are tremendously popular, and although we have yet to hear of a Spectrum or an Electron in the charts, their time will surely come (there's already a powerful Midi interface and software package for the Amstrad).

The attractive aspect of micro-based music making is that you can start (very) cheaply and build up as your interest

increases. The software packages will help you play along the way (giving easily understood graphics displays, rounding off your timing, helping you create new sounds and so on) and before long you can be in a position to create highly professional sounds. At that stage, your own creativity and imagination have to take over.

In this column we'll be looking at every



Heaven 17

available music package coming on to the market, whether it's for a micro's on-board sound chip, for use with hardware add-ons, or for control of cheap Midi synthesisers via a suitable interface. If you have any cassettes of your own music we'll gladly have a listen, and we'll be happy to answer any questions on micro-based music. Stick with this column and in a couple of years you may be the new Heaven 17.

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New Releases

John Cook looks through this week's new arrivals

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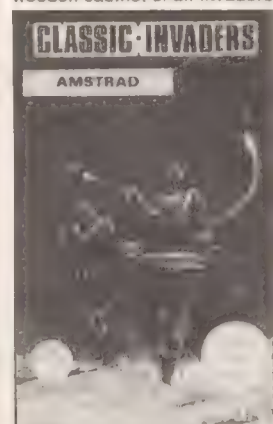
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Program Spiky Harold Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Program Graham Gooch's Test Cricket Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £9.95 (tape) £14.95 (disc) **Supplier** Audiogenic, 12 Chiltern Enterprise Centre, Station Road, Theale, Berkshire RG7 4AA

Program Classic Invaders Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £2.99 (tape) £9.95 (disc) **Supplier** Bubble Bus Software, 87 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1RX.

Golly - Classic Invaders? It can't be? No? All the memories of a mispent youth come flooding back Leaning up against the wooden cabinet of an Invaders



machine in some dark corner of an under-age pub, trying to make half a pint of weak lager shandy last all night, feeding

the machine with 10p's.

And now, Bubble Bus would have it, these glory days can be recreated with *Classic Invaders*, Amstrad style, released under its 'Mini-Bus' range. Or can they?

Loading the game shows the same basic scenario as ever - you control a laser base at the bottom of the screen, whose destiny is to move left and right, then zap the hordes of aliens that are slowly descending from the top of the screen, to invade the Earth. They are also constantly dropping bombs which you must skillfully avoid, only aided by the cover your three bunkers can give you, until they too, are blown to bits.

Kill them all... then there's another screenful, then another, then another...

Now don't take me wrong. *Classic Invaders* is OK. The Invaders are now brightly coloured - quite smart in fact - and the game plays well enough. But to my mind, they're not green enough, not loud enough, and you don't lose money every time you make a mistake.

But if you've had your head in a bucket for seven years, just bought a computer and want to know what started it all; this is it.

Program Voodoo Rage Type Arcade Type Amstrad Price £1.99 **Supplier** Antarctic, Arctic Computing, Main St, Brandesburton, Yorkshire YO25 8RL

Program Kane Type Adventure Micro Amstrad Price £2.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Program Rad Zone Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £1.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Program Turbo Esprit Type Arcade Micro Amstrad Price £8.95 **Supplier** Durell, Castle Lodge, Castle Green, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4AB.

ATARI

Program King's Quest Type Adventure Micro Atari ST Price £29.95 **Supplier** Mirrorsoft, Purnell Book Centre, Paulton, Bristol BS18 5LQ.

Pick of the week

Program Molecule Man Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Mastertronic is just about to enter the big time. Three titles in the CES Hall of Fame this season indicates that the American side of things is just about to take off, and there are some cracking titles in the pipeline for release soon.

Flash Gordon is one to look out for in August - *Ninja* is promised to be the martial arts game to beat all martial arts games. And next month (you read it first here folks!) an Amstrad version of the arcade hit of '86 *Gauntlet* to be named *Storm*. These are the guys that all the other budget software houses have to beat... and you can see why with something like *Molecule Man*.

This one has you controlling something that looks a bit like the bubble in all the Corona adverts, around 256 *Knight Lore* type screens. The single colour display and varied graphics are both done in a workman-like fashion.

The scam is that you are stuck in this maze/planet!

Molecule Man

whatever, deadly radiation all about you, and must collect 16 electric circuits in order to enable you to teleport off.

To aid you, you need pills (which ward off the effects of the rays, for a time) and bombs (no explanation needed - what would you do with a bomb?), both of which can be obtained from dispensers dotted around the place - if you have a coin... which in turn are found, etc. etc.

This makes it an acceptable enough race-against-time arcade adventure - and at £1.99 would have more than enough to recommend it to lovers of this genre.

The surprise comes on side B of the tape - a maze designer/editor that allows you to alter the existing maze or create your own, edit each and every screen to make it harder... or maybe easier (ha, ha). you name it, you can alter it, save it to tape and then play your own version of the game. Or challenge a friend to play your version. Or invert a completely new game around the existing character and objects. This must increase the playing life of a game at least five-fold.

Program The Black Cauldron Type Adventure Micro Atari ST Price £29.95 **Supplier** Mirrorsoft, Purnell Book Centre, Paulton, Bristol BS18 5LQ.

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Program Office Mate Type Utility Micro BBC B Price £12.00 (tape or disc) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

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Program BBC Money Management Type Utility Micro BBC B Price £12.95 (disc only) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8.

Program Woks! Type Arcade Micro BBC/Electron Price £1.99 **Supplier** Arctic Comput-

ing, Main St, Brandesburton, Yorkshire.

How's this for a plot? The Emperor has confiscated everyone's woks - because he thinks they are eating too much fatty food - and placed them in strongrooms with lots of ladders and guards.



You as the people's champion must rescue them. Does this win the prize for the thinnest and silliest disguise for a collect and dodge game or what?

Still, the graphics are chunky BBC, but colourful, and the gameplay is diverting enough for a short while ('Collect and dodge' with a touch of *Amidar*. I should have said)

Unpretentious, undemanding and cheap. You could do worse.

Program BBC Life and Business Organiser Type Utility Micro BBC B Price £19.95 (disc or Rom) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Statutory Sick Pay Package Type Utility Micro BBC B Price £39.95 **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 4RS.

Program The Great Wall Type Arcade Micro BBC B Price £1.99 **Supplier** Antarctic, Arctic Computing, Main St, Brandesburton, Yorkshire YO25 8RL.

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Program Shark Type Arcade Micro C16/Plus4 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Program Baby Berks Type Arcade Micro C16/Plus4 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Alpha Omega, CRL Group, 9 Kings Yard, Carpenters Rd, London E15

Program The Exploits of Fingers Malone Type Arcade Micro C16/Plus4 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Program Street Olympics Type Arcade Micro C16/Plus4 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

COMMODORE 64

Program Nexus Type Arcade Adventure Micro Commodore 64 Price £9.95 (tape) £12.95 (disc) **Supplier** Nexus Productions, DSB House, 30 High St,

Beckenham, Kent BR3 1AY.

Program Return of the Space Warrior Type Arcade Micro Commodore 64 Price £1.99 **Supplier** Alpha Omega, CRL House, 9 Kings Yard, Carpenters Rd, London E15.

It must be the time of the year, but there's a lot of so-called 'budget' titles around right now. My theory is that this is supposed to lure school kids back to their computer during the summer - when they should, naturally, be out annoying the neighbours. Still, this is an offering from CRL's budget label, Alpha Omega, called *Return of the Space Warrior*. "It had to be a nightmare," says the cassette inlay; and true enough, it is - namely a fairly lame version of *Joust*.

Joust, you might remember, was a highly original game in its time. Played on a screen



with downwards gravity (and strategically place platforms for you to rest on) you played a knight aboard a gryphon-like beast, armed with a lance. You pressed 'fire' to flap your beast's wings (and therefore gain height) which was of great importance in the game, as if you collided with an enemy, you would die if your lance was lower than his.

Back at *Space Warrior*, gone are the Gryphons (in come ovulaspheres - blobs to you) and the lances and the excellent two player option in which you could play simultaneously on screen with a friend. What you are left with is a game which admittedly can get quite fast - but is totally lacking in visual appeal and atmosphere. Mediocre budget fare I'm afraid.

Program Bump Set Spike Type Arcade Micro Commodore 64

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Program Spike Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird Software, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2

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Program Wild Bunch Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2

Program The Boggly Type Adventure Micro Spectrum Price £7.95 **Supplier** CRL Group, 9 Kings Yard, Carpenters Rd, London E15.

Program Dragon of Notacare Type Adventure Micro Spectrum Price £2.50 **Supplier** David Edgar, 1 High Parksail, Erskine, Scotland PA5 7HY.

Program The Master Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Antarctic, Arctic Computing, Main St, Brandesburton, Yorkshire YO25 8RL.

Program Office Master Type Utility Micro Spectrum Price £15.00 (tape) £17.50 (microdrive) **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Conquest Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £2.99 **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2

Program Ninja Master Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £1.99 **Supplier** Firebird, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2.

Now you'd expect a program entitled *Ninja Warrior* to be all gore, broken bones and white pyjama tops, wouldn't you?

Well, no... you'd be wrong - for a start we all know that the sneaky Ninja, 'a breed of warriors feared by all... only ever wear black, so as to sneak up on unsuspecting passers-by and generally do the dirty on them in the depths of the night. And also, in this martial arts

epic, the only blood ever spilt is your own.

It is the annual Ninja games - and this is your big chance to impress the elders. Yup, Bruce Lee finally meets Daley



Thompson. There are four tests in all. The 'punch the approaching arrows' test. The 'chopping the log in half' test (this is a hammer on two keys job). The 'deflect the stars' test (high, middle or low). Finally a 'zap the cans with the blowpipe' test. Like all the other sports simulations, you are given three chances to attain a qualifying score to pass on to the next test.

The graphics (mostly black on yellow) are not really that good, the gameplay isn't that good and the sound consists of two sampled screams which you will soon get tired of.

Put it this way; despite all the chopping and parrying, this is not another *Thrust*.

Program Pentagram Type Arcade Micro Spectrum Price £9.95 **Supplier** US Gold, Unit 10, The Parkway Industrial Centre, Heneage St, Birmingham B7

QL

Program Life and Business Organiser Type Utility Micro QL Price £19.95 **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Executive Adventure Type Adventure Micro QL Price £12.95 **Supplier** Gemini, Gemini House, Concorde Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4RS.

Program Dragonhold Type Arcade Micro QL Price £19.95 **Supplier** Robbin Computer System, 11 Bannerdale Rd, Sheffield, S7 2DJ.

Top Twenty

- | | | |
|--------|---|-----------------|
| 1 (-) | World Cup Carnival (Spectrum, Amstrad, C16) | US Gold |
| 2 (3) | Kik Start (Spectrum, C64, Atari) | Mastertronic |
| 3 (5) | Batman (Spectrum, Amstrad) | Firebird |
| 4 (2) | Formula One Simulator (Various) | Mastertronic |
| 5 (1) | Thrust (C64) | Firebird |
| 6 (7) | International Karate (Spectrum, C64) | System 3 |
| 7 (-) | Cauldron 2 (C64) | Palace |
| 8 (4) | Commando (Various) | Elite |
| 9 (6) | Spindizzy (Spectrum, C64, Amstrad) | Electric Dreams |
| 10 (8) | Rock 'N' Wrestle (Sp, C64, Am) | Melbourne House |



Biggles flies in at 16

- | | | |
|---------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 11 (15) | Saboteur (Spectrum, C64, Amstrad) | Durell |
| 12 (9) | Bomb Jack (Spectrum, C64, Amstrad) | Elite |
| 13 (-) | Knight Tyme (Spectrum) | Mastertronic |
| 14 (16) | Last V8 (C64, Amstrad, Atari) | Mastertronic |
| 15 (14) | Vegas Jackpot (Various) | Mastertronic |
| 16 (-) | Biggles (C64) | Mirrorsoft |
| 17 (-) | One Man And His Droid (Various) | Mastertronic |
| 18 (-) | Ninja Master (Spectrum) | Firebird |
| 19 (-) | Green Beret (Spectrum, C64) | Imagine |
| 20 (-) | Heavy On The Magik (Spectrum) | Gargoyle Games |



Straight in at number one

Top Tens

Amstrad

- | | |
|---------|------------------------------|
| 1 (-) | Batman (Ocean) |
| 2 (2) | Winter Games (Epyz/US Gold) |
| 3 (3) | Commando (Elite) |
| 4 (1) | Get Dexter (PSS) |
| 5 (-) | World Cup Carnival (US Gold) |
| 6 (-) | Boulder (Grenlin) |
| 7 (4) | Elite (Firebird) |
| 8 (4) | Last V8 (Mastertronic) |
| 9 (-) | One Simulator (Mastertronic) |
| 10 (10) | Into Oblivion (Mastertronic) |



Thrust - knocked off the top

All figures compiled by Gallup/Microscope

Commodore 64

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1 (-) | World Cup Carnival (US Gold) |
| 2 (1) | Thrust (Firebird) |
| 3 (2) | Int Karale (System 3) |
| 4 (-) | Cauldron 2 (Palace) |
| 5 (6) | Biggles (Mirrorsoft) |
| 6 (9) | Saboteur (Durell) |
| 7 (3) | Spindizzy (Electric Dreams) |
| 8 (-) | Bump Set Spike (Mastertronic) |
| 9 (7) | One Simulator (Mastertronic) |
| 10 (18) | Golf (Ariolasoft) |

Atari

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1 (-) | Kik Start (Mastertronic) |
| 2 (1) | Vegas Jackpot (Mastertronic) |
| 3 (3) | Last V8 (Mastertronic) |
| 4 (8) | One Man & his Droid (Mironic) |
| 5 (4) | New York City (Americana) |
| 6 (9) | Scotter (Americana) |
| 7 (7) | Shamus (Americana) |
| 8 (6) | Fighter Pilot (Digital Int) |
| 9 (2) | Action Biker (Mastertronic) |
| 10 (10) | Arcade Classics (Datassoft) |

BBC

- | | |
|--------|--------------------------------|
| 1 (1) | Commando (Elite) |
| 2 (-) | Bruce Lee (US Gold) |
| 3 (3) | Tennis (Bugbyte) |
| 4 (8) | Jack Attack (Bugbyte) |
| 5 (-) | Jet Set Willy (Ware Projects) |
| 6 (2) | Winter Olympics (Tynesoft) |
| 7 (-) | Comp. Hits 10 (Beau Jolly) |
| 8 (-) | Galactic Patrol (Mastertronic) |
| 9 (10) | Combat Lynx (Durell) |
| 10 (-) | Death Star (Superior) |

Spectrum

- | | |
|--------|-------------------------------|
| 1 (-) | World Cup Carnival (US Gold) |
| 2 (1) | Batman (Ocean) |
| 3 (-) | Knight Tyme (Mastertronic) |
| 4 (3) | Rock 'N' Wrestle (Mel House) |
| 5 (4) | Green Beret (Imagine) |
| 6 (-) | Ninja Master (Firebird) |
| 7 (7) | Heavy On The Magik (Gargoyle) |
| 8 (9) | Bomb Jack (Elite) |
| 9 (6) | Fireman (Mastertronic) |
| 10 (-) | Quazatron (Hawson) |

NEXT WEEK

● CES report

The Summer Consumer Electronic Show in Chicago is the world's biggest exhibi-



tion for the home computer industry. We'll have all the news and brand new products from the show.

● Language series

Next week we focus on Pascal, the highly structured language which is rapidly becoming an industry standard.

● Soundcheck

Don't miss the next in Mark Jenkins' new regular music column.

● Plus . . .

Win a copy of the forthcoming release from Nexus in our Arcade Action competition.

The Hackers



EQUINOX

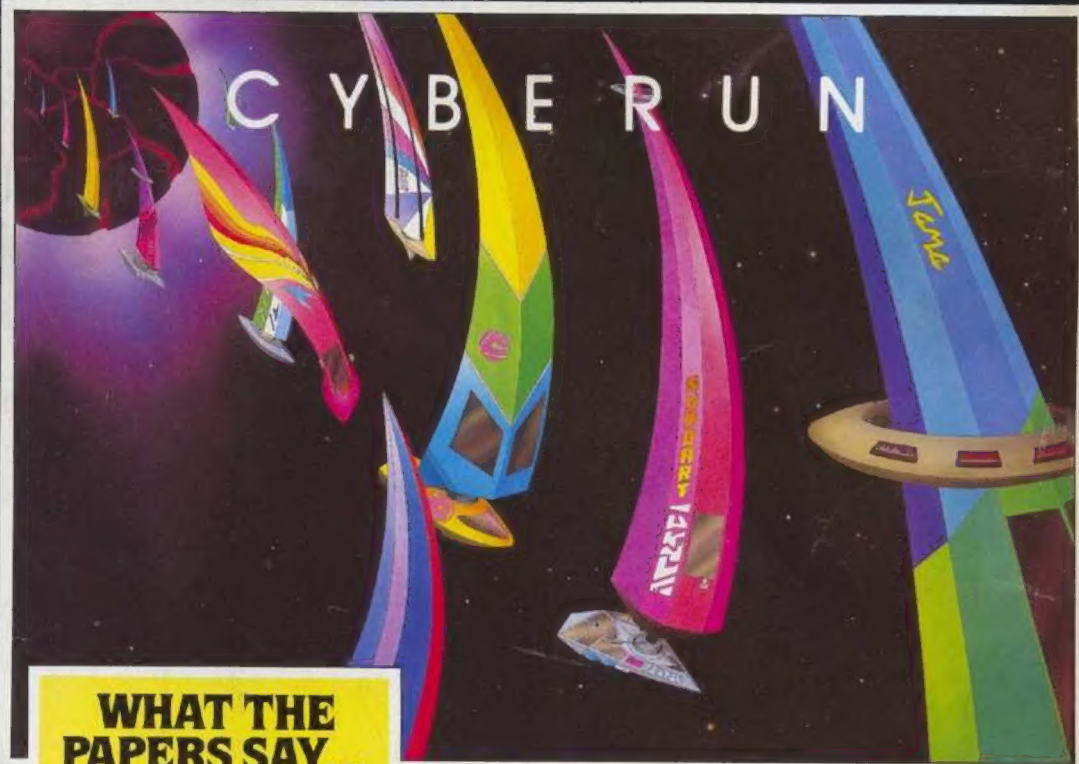


Spectrum/Amstrad £9.95

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Western Road
Bracknell
Berks.

ULTIMATE
PLAY THE GAME

Back with a Vengeance!



WHAT THE PAPERS SAY...

"Once you start playing the game it becomes increasingly clear that Ultimate have produced yet another excellent game. The playing area is huge and there are some excellent graphical effects like the stars which are beautifully parallaxed."

"Playability wise Cyberun is an excellent game."

"The inlay card doesn't give much away, so it is a challenge just to find out what all the various goodies are for."

"This is a classic shoot 'em up which I'm sure all fans of Lunar Jetman will enjoy."

CRASH May 1986

PENTAGRAM and CYBERUN are available for the Spectrum 48k and Amstrad from selected branches of W.H. Smith, Boots, John Menzies, Woolworths and all good software stores. They are also available from Ultimate Play the Game, The Green, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE6 5JU. (Postage and packing included.)

£9.95 including VAT



PENTAGRAM

